Woven With The Ship

Cyrus Townsend Brady

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WOVEN WITH THE SHIP

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"Oh, Captain Barry, you must do something!"

See page 35

WOVEN WITH THE SHIP

A NOVEL OF 1865

TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN
OTHER VERACIOUS TALES
OF VARIOUS SORTS

BY

CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY, LL.D.

Author of "When Blades are Out and Love's Afield," "For the Freedom of the Sea," "Hohenzollern," "The Quiberon Touch," "Border Fights and Fighters," etc.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS BY
HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY, FRANK X. LEYENDECKER, W. GLACKENS, WILL CRAWFORD, AND H. L. V. PARKHURST

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1902

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Published October, 1902

Electrotyped and Printed by
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Lovingly Dedicated
to
Margaret and Katharine

Whose chief pleasure during one seashore
summer lay in listening to their
father while this
romance was

"Woven with the Ship"

2128963

PREFACE

PREFACES remind me of a certain text of Scripture,—*i.e.*, "the last shall be first," —for they are things written after which go before! Whether or not they serve a useful purpose is hard to say. I have several thousands of them in my library, most of which I have read, and perhaps the fact that I am a reader of prefaces may mark me as unique. And the mark may be accentuated to the gentle reader—if this preface should have any—when I say that I am also one of the few remaining authors who write them. Only one of my books is without a preface,—though some of them are disguised as notes, or forewords, or afterwords,—and I hereby apologize for the acephalous condition of that volume.

I am determined that this book shall be amply provided, and though I write the preface while I am sending back the proof galleys, yet I will begin at the beginning. Beginnings are sometimes interesting, although the interest of a beginning largely depends on the ending thereof. I shall hope that this book in the end may commend itself sufficiently to my indulgent readers to make the story of the beginning worth while.

"The years are many, the years are long," since a happy young sailor, fresh from his graduation at the

United States Naval Academy, spent some of the pleasantest days of his life in the shadow of the old ship; for there was a ship, just such a one as I have described, and in just such a condition. There was a white house on the hill, too, and a very old naval officer, who took a great interest in the opening career of the young aspirant who passed so many hours lying on the grass amid the mouldering ways, with the huge bulk of the ship looming over his head and the sparkling waters of the bay breaking at his feet.

There were girls, too, and a sailor, and soldiers galore across the harbor in the barracks, and back of all the sleepy, dreamy, idle, quaint, and ancient little town. The story, of course, is only a romance; but the setting at least is actual, and there is this touch of realism in the tale: when the old ship was torn down to be made into kindling-wood, a part of it fell upon one of the destroyers and crushed the life out of him,—stern protest against an ignoble ending!

The idea of the story came to me twenty years ago. Indeed, in a brief, disconnected way I set it down on paper and forgot it until I chanced to resurrect it last year, when I threw aside the old notes and wrote the story *de novo*.

I intend it as a character sketch of the old admiral, the veteran sailor, the young officer, the innocent woman they all loved, and—dare I say it?—the mighty ship. Here are contrasts, surely.

When I wrote "Hohenzollern," I thought it would be perfectly plain to every one that it was not an historical novel. Vain hope! Yet I am not discouraged

by the lack of perception on the part of the critics. Therefore I put this novel forth with a stronger confidence that it will not be considered in that category. Save for what I have admitted, there is not one word of history in it. Indeed, I have deliberately, and because it was my fancy, chosen to appropriate the name of Admiral Charles Stewart, "Old Ironsides,"—who did indeed live well into the Civil War period, but who died under very different circumstances,—for the name of the ancient captain in the white house on the hill. I apologize to his *manes*, his descendants, and his friends for the liberty.

Now, I do not write this because I wish to make any apology for the historical novel. Not at all. The thing is slightly overdone at present, but that is proof of its goodness. So far as I am concerned I will stand by my guns. I love to read historic romances when they are good, and I love to write them—even when they are as my own. I expect to write more of them, too ; but this really is not one. It is a war story without any war, a sea story without any sea ; yet it exhibits a great struggle and rings with a great victory. The reader may characterize it further at pleasure.

As for the second part of the volume I have called it Veracious Tales advisedly, for all of these stories are founded upon facts in one way or another. Some of them have been suggested to me by incidents with which I am familiar because in them I bore a small part. The substance of one of them came from a young English traveller who told a romantic incident at a delightful dinner at the New York University

Club. A real diary suggested another. An historical mystery as to what became of a certain cargo of slaves captured by Decatur in the Mediterranean evoked a third. Neglected chapters in history and biography are responsible for some of the others, as the Martinique tale, for the Diamond Rock was once a ship! Sir Henry Irving's marvellous rendition of Matthias in *The Bells* so possessed me with its power that after I came home from the theatre I could not sleep until I had written the story. All of these tales represent real incidents, therefore, or are founded upon them in some way.

Writing a short story, with me at least, is very different from writing a novel. I can invent plots of novels without the slightest difficulty, but the making of a short story is different. The making is a case of birth! The single incident, the brief condensed plot, or the vivid character sketch which is necessary to a proper short story has to come to me from outside. The short story is the product of inspiration, the long story the result of labor. Perhaps, therefore, there is more truth in the short story than in the long —from my point of view.

At any rate, in this volume are two kinds, and the readers may decide. If they have half as much pleasure out of the book as I had, they will thank me for having written.

C. T. B.

THE LAKE PLACID CLUB,
ADIRONDACKS, NEW YORK,
June 16, 1902.

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Part I

WOVEN WITH THE SHIP

WOVEN WITH THE SHIP

CHAPTER I

The Building of the Ship

JUST half a century had elapsed since, cutting down the virgin forest to make room for the ways, they laid her keel blocks in the clearing. With the cunning brain of Henry Eckford, one of the greatest of our shipbuilders, to plan, and the skilful hands of the New England shipwrights to execute, with timber cut by the sturdy woodsmen from where it stood in the forest, the giant frames rose apace, until presently, in an incredibly short time, there stood upon Ship House Point a mighty vessel ready for the launching.

Ship House Point—so called from the ship—was a long ridge of land sloping gently down from a low hill and extending far out into Lake Ontario. It helped to enclose on one side a commodious lake haven known in that day, and ever since, as Sewell's Harbor, from old George Sewell, a hunter, fisherman, innkeeper, and trader, who had settled there years before.

Thither, in the busy warlike days of 1813–14, had resorted dashing naval officers in their ruffled shirts, heavily laced blue coats, with their huge cocked hats, skin-tight kersey pantaloons, and tasselled half boots. In their wake rolled ancient tars in blue shirts and flowing trousers, their mouths full of strange oaths and tales of distant seas; some of the older veterans among them still wearing their hair in the time-honored pigtail of an already disappearing age.

On the bluff across the harbor mouth, and just opposite to Ship House Point, a rude log fort had been erected in 1812, a central block-house and a surrounding stockade, mounting a few inconsiderable pieces of artillery. From a tall staff on the parade the stars and stripes fluttered in the wind, and nodded in amicable salute toward a similar ensign which the patriotic builders had hoisted on the Point.

Government storehouses filled with munitions and supplies of various kinds, both for the naval forces on the lakes and for the armies designed for the long projected invasion of Canada likewise, stood back of the wharves crowded with the miscellaneous shipping of the suddenly thriving little town. Soldiers from the fort, therefore, in blue and gray uniforms mingled with the ship-carpenters, wood-cutters, pioneers, sailors, and traders, and the spot speedily became one of the busiest in the then far Northwest.

Sometimes in the offing the white sails of the English or American squadrons could be seen, and on the summer days from the distant horizon might have been heard the dull boom of cannon telling a tale of

some spirited engagement. And more than once thereafter a melancholy and shattered ship brought in a ghastly cargo of dead, dying, and wounded, the care of which heavily taxed the resources of the community; and the women of the village—for there were women there from the beginning—had grim lessons, learned sometimes through breaking hearts, that war was a more serious business than the gay officers, the bright uniforms, the beautiful flags, and the brave ships had indicated.

The town had sprung into being around Sewell's store and tavern, amid all these activities and undertakings, almost as if by magic—quite as the great ship had risen on the shore, in truth. Men did things in a hurry in those days, and no one was much surprised when, some thirty days after the keel was laid, the indefatigable Eckford informed stout old Commodore Chauncey, the American commander on the lakes, that the *Susquehanna*—for so the ship-of-the-line which was to establish finally the American preponderance of force over the British on Lake Ontario was called—was ready for launching, and great preparations were made in the very early spring of 1815 for this important and interesting ceremony.

A few days before the appointed time, however, there came to the impatient commodore, the persevering builder, and the busy workmen a messenger bearing a heartrending despatch, long delayed in transmission, from the Secretary of the Navy. That official announced that the war was over, that peace with England had been declared at the close of the

preceding year, and directed that the preparations for launching and completing the vessel must be at once abandoned. It was a sore grief to Eckford and his fellow-shipwrights, a great disappointment to Chauncey and his brave seamen, and a terrible blow to the thriving town. It had grown and flourished in war, and it was to languish and die in peace—a reversal of natural law apparently! But there was no help for it. The orders had to be obeyed. The war-ships on the lakes were broken up, or sold, and a few were laid up in ordinary, the officers and men were detached to the more congenial salt-water stations, and the ship-carpenters were withdrawn to the seaboard towns whence they had been collected. The fort was dismantled, the garrison mustered out of the service, and the storehouses emptied and closed.

The young ship-of-the-line, hastily housed over, was left alone with the abandoned town. The busy place, its reasons for being gone, speedily sank into a state of public decay. The deserted storehouses fell into ruin; the once noisy wharves, unvisited by any save an occasional small vessel, rotted away; the merchants and traders closed out their stocks and departed; the hunters and pioneers moved farther westward into the vast wilderness extending its mysterious beckoning call to their adventurous souls; the grass grew thick in the silent streets, and it seemed as if the death-sentence of the village had been written.

But as years sped away some of its pristine life came back to it. The farmer again speeded his plow

and planted his corn in the clearings. Sheep and cattle once more dotted the fields. A new order took the place of the old. Country churches rose; little feet plodded unwillingly toward a small red schoolhouse, where childish laughter and play at recess mingled with tears over puzzling lessons and unsolvable problems. The stores were opened one by one, and a few vessels came back to the harbor. On market days the farmers crowded the square with their teams, the village awoke from its long sleep and became a modestly thriving little country town again,—drowsing on into life once more. And although the very oldest inhabitants, remembering the busy days forever gone, were not satisfied, the younger people were content and happy in their pretty little hamlet.

Meanwhile, what of the ship in all these changing years? Time was when Ship House Point had been covered with a virgin forest extending even to the water's edge. It was now bare of trees, for the massive trunks had been wrought into the fabric of the ship, and no others had come to take their places. There, neglected and unnoticed, she had stood naked and gaunt for a long time, for the flimsy ship-house covering her had been the first thing to go. Through the swift years the burning sunshine of many summers fell upon her green, unseasoned planks, and the unsheltered wood shrinking in the fierce heat opened her seams widely on every hand. Upon her decks the rain descended and the snow fell. The storms of bitter winters drove upon her in successive and

relentless attacks. The rough spring and autumn gales tore from her huge sections of timber, leaving gaping wounds, while the drying rot of time and neglect penetrated her very heart.

Rust consumed the bolt-heads and slowly ate up the metal that held her together. Yet in spite of all she still stood, outwardly indifferent alike to the attack of the storm or the kiss of the sun,—a mighty monster towering high in the air, unfinished, incomplete, inchoate, disintegrating, weaponless, but still typifying strength and power and war. In spite of her decay, in spite of her age, she looked the masterful vessel she was designed to be.

The waves broke in winter in icy assault upon the rocky shore on the seaward side, as if defying the ship to meet them. They rippled on the shoals, on the other hand, in summer with tender caressing voices, wooing her to her native element, stretching out white-fingered hands of invitation. And the air carried the message of the waters into every hidden recess in the most secret depths of the ship.

In some strange way, to those who grew to know her, the ship seemed to live; they imbued her with personality, and congenial spirits seemed to recognize her yearning for a plunge into that all-embracing inland sea. She hung poised, as it were, like a bird ready for flight, and watchers standing within her shadow divined her longing for that mad first rush from the ways.

The ripple of the water had never curled along that ship's massive keel; her broad bows had never

buffeted a way through the thunderous attack of the storm-waves; she had never felt the ocean uplift; the long pitch and toss, the unsteady roll and heave which spoke of water-borne life had never been hers; yet, looking at the graceful lines, the mighty frames, the most unimaginative would have said that the old ship lusted for the sea, and, in futile and ungratified desire, passed her shore-bound days in earth-spurning discontent.

CHAPTER II

His Last Command

ON the hill back of the Point, embowered on three sides in the trees, which had been cut away in front to afford a fair view of the ship, the Point itself, and the open waters of the lake beyond, stood an old white house facing the water, with a long covered porch, high-pillared and lofty, extending across its entire front. Old, yet young compared to the ship. Overlooking the ship, on a platform on the very brow of the hill, a long, old-fashioned six-pound gun was mounted on a naval carriage. Back of the gun rose a tall flag-staff, and from the top fluttered night and day a small blue flag with two stars, the ensign of a rear-admiral. There were no masts or spars upon the ship below the hill, of course, but aft from the mouldering taffrail a staff had been erected, and from it flew the stars and stripes, for during the last half of her existence the ship had rejoiced in a crew and a captain!

Some twenty-five years since a quaint old naval officer had taken up his abode at the house on the hill. With him had come a young sailor, who, disdaining the house, had slung his hammock aboard

the ship,—finding a place between decks which, after a few repairs, would shelter him from the storms. When the old officer came, he hoisted at the mast which was at once erected in the yard the broad blue pennant of a commodore, and it was only after Farragut had made his splendid passage up the Mississippi, and awakened the quiet shores of the Father of Waters with the thunder of his guns, so that the title of commodore became too small for him, that the old veteran had been promoted with other veterans—and with Farragut himself—to the rank of rear-admiral, recently established,—certainly a rank entirely in consonance with his merit at least.

The old man had been practically forgotten, lost sight of, in the glory accruing to the newer names among the Civil War heroes ; yet he had been among the foremost in that great galaxy of sailors who had made the navy of the United States so formidable in the War of 1812.

Old men of the town, whose memories as children ran back beyond even the life of the ship, recalled having seen, in those busy, unforgotten days of 1814–15, many uniforms like to the quaint old dress which the admiral sometimes wore on occasions of ceremony ; and there were some yet living who remembered the day when the news came that the mighty *Constitution* had added to her record the last and most brilliant of her victories in the capture of the frigates *Cyane* and *Levant.* The man who had made the capture—who, when his wife had asked him to bring her a British frigate for a present when he

set forth upon the cruise, had answered that he would bring her two, and who had done it—was the man who had been stationed in the white house on the hill to watch over the old ship.

The battles and storms, the trials and cares, the sorrows and troubles of eighty-five years had beat upon that white head; and though he was now bent and broken, though he tottered as he paced up and down the porch after the habit of the quarter-deck, though his eye was dim indeed and his natural force greatly abated, he was still master of himself. When the Civil War broke out his brave old soul had yearned to be upon a heaving deck once more, he had craved to hear the roar of guns from the mighty batteries beneath his feet, to feel again the kiss of the salt wind upon his tanned and weather-beaten cheek. He had longed in the deadly struggle of '61–'65 to strike another blow for the old flag he had done so much to make formidable and respected on the sea; but it was not to be. Superannuated, old, laid up in ordinary, he quietly watched over the rotting ship which was his last command.

In some strange way, with a sailor's superstition, as the years had passed, as he had grown feebler and the ship had grown older, he bound up his own term of life with that of the vessel. While it stood he should live, when it fell should come his end. He watched and waited.

When the night threatened to be wild and stormy, the report of the evening gun with which Captain Barry invariably saluted the flag ere he struck it

would seem to him the sounding of his death-knell. When the tempest howled around the old house, he could hear, in fancy, above its wild screaming the crashing of the timbers of the ship falling in shapeless ruins on the mouldering ways. In the morning, after such a night, he would rise and creep to the door, totter out on the porch with the aid of his cane, and peer down on the ship. Some portion of it might have been swept away, perhaps, but if it still stood he would feel that he had a respite for another day.

Many a tall vessel had he commanded, many a gallant frigate or great ship-of-the-line he had driven through the tempestuous seas. Upon some of them, as on the *Constitution*, he had won eternal fame, yet never had he loved a vessel as his heart had gone out to the rotting mass of this incompleted ship.

He did not dream, when he came there twenty-five years before—an old man then—that either he or the ship would last so long; yet there they both stood; older, weaker, feebler, more broken, and breaking with every passing hour, but still a ship and still a captain.

During the years of their association the admiral had unconsciously invested the ship with a personality of its own. It seemed human to him. He dreamed about it when he slept. He was never so happy as when awake he sat and watched it. He talked to it like a friend when they were alone. Sometimes he reached his old trembling hand out to it in a caressing gesture. He had long since grown

too feeble to go down to it; he could only look upon it from afar. Yet he understood its longing, its dissatisfaction, its despair. A certain sympathy grew up between them. He loved it as it had been a woman. He would fain have kissed its keel.

Yet the devotion the admiral felt for the ship was scarcely greater than that which had sprung up in the heart of the old sailor who lived aboard it.

Old John Barry had been a quartermaster on the *Constitution*, and had followed the fortunes of his captain from ship to ship, from shore to shore, until he died. After that the duty of looking after the captain devolved upon his son, young John Barry; and when the commodore had been ordered to Ship House Point, more with the intention of providing him with a congenial home for his declining years than for any other purpose, young John Barry had followed him.

Young John Barry he was no longer. He was fifty years old now, and, like the admiral, had unconsciously made the life of the ship stand for his own life as well. The witchery of disappointment and regret, pregnant in every timber, bore hard upon him also. He had been a gay, dashing, buoyant, happy-go-lucky jack-tar in his day; but, living alone on that great old ship, some of the melancholy, some of the dissatisfaction, some of the longing, some of the futile desire which fairly reeked from every plank had entered his own rough and rugged soul.

The bitter wind had sung through the timbers of the ship too many tales of might-have-been, as he lay

in his hammock night after night, not to have left its impression upon him. He became a silent, taciturn, grave old man. Of huge bulk and massive build, his appearance suggested the ship-of-the-line,—strength in age, power in decay. He loved the ship in his way even as the admiral did.

Risking his life in the process, he climbed all over it, marking with skilful eyes and pained heart the slow process of disintegration. He did not kiss it,—kisses were foreign to his nature, he knew nothing of them,—but he laid his great hands caressingly upon the giant frames, he pressed his cheek against the mighty prow, he stretched himself with open arms upon the bleaching deck, as if he would embrace the ship.

When the storms beat upon it in the night, he sometimes made his way forward and stood upon the forecastle fronting the gale, and as the wind swept over him and the ship quivered and shook and vibrated under the tempestuous attack, he fancied that he felt the deck heave as it might under the motion of the uptossed wave.

He dreamed that the ship quivered in the long rush of the salt seas. Then the rain beat upon him unheeded. Wrapped in his great-coat in winter, he even disdained the driving snow, and as he stood by the weather cathead, from which no anchor had ever depended, and peered out into the whirling darkness, he seemed to hear the roar of a breaker ahead!

The ship was his own, his property. The loss of a single plank, the giving way of a single bolt, was

like the loss of a part of himself. With it he lived, with it he would die. Alone he passed his nights in the hollow of that echo of the past. Sometimes he felt half mad in the rotting vessel; yet nothing could have separated him from the ship.

The little children of the adjacent village feared him, although he had never harmed any of them, and was as gentle as a mother in his infrequent dealings with them all; but he was so silent, so grave, so grim, so weird in some way, that they instinctively avoided him. Their light laughter was stifled, their childish play was quieted when Captain Barry—so they called him—passed by. He never noticed it, or, if he did, he gave no sign. Indeed, his heart was so wrapped up in a few things that he marked nothing else.

The old admiral, whom he watched over and cared for with the fidelity of a dog,—nay, I should say of a sailor,—was the earliest object of his affections. To look after him was a duty which had become the habit of his life. He cherished him in his heart along with the ship. When the others had gone to their rest, he often climbed up on the quarter-deck, if the night were still, and sat late in the evening staring at the lights in the house on the hill until they went out, musing in his quaint way on the situation. When the days were calm he thought first of the admiral, in stormy times first of the ship. But above both ship and captain in his secret heart there was another who completed the strange quartet on Ship House Point,—a woman.

Above duty and habit there is always a woman.

CHAPTER III

The Woman and the Man who Loved Her

THE wife of the admiral, to whom he had brought the flags of the two British ships on that memorable cruise, had long since departed this life. Her daughter, too, who had married somewhat late in life, had died in giving birth to a girl, and this little maiden, Emily Sanford by name, in default of other haven or nearer relationship, had been brought, when still an infant in arms, to the white house on the hill, to be taken care of by the old admiral. In the hearts of both the old men she divided affection with the ship.

With the assistance of one of the admiral's distant connections, a faithful old woman, also passed to the enjoyment of her reward long since, Emily Sanford had been carried through the troubles and trials incident to early childhood. At first she had gone with other little children to the quaint red schoolhouse in the village. She had been a regular attendant until she had exhausted its limited capacity for imparting knowledge. After that the admiral, a man of keen intelligence, of world-wide observation, and of a deeply reflective habit of mind, had completed

her education himself, upon such old-fashioned lines as his experience suggested. She had been an apt pupil indeed, and the results reflected great credit upon his sound, if somewhat unusual, methods of training, or would have reflected had there been any one to see.

In all her life Emily Sanford had never been away from her grandfather for a single day; she had actually never left that little town, and, except in school-time, she had not often left the Point. Although just out of her teens, she was not old enough to have become discontented—not yet. She was as childlike, as innocent, as unworldly and unsophisticated a maiden as ever lived,—and beautiful as well. It was Prospero and Miranda translated to the present. The old admiral adored his granddaughter. If the ship was his Nemesis, Emily was his fortune.

As for Barry the sailor,—and it were injustice to the brave old seaman to think of him as Caliban,—he worshipped the ground the girl walked on. He was in love with her. A rude old man of fifty in love with a girl of twenty; a girl immeasurably above him in birth, station, education—in everything! It was surprising! Had any one known it, however, it would not have seemed grotesque,—only pitiful. Barry himself did not know it. He was too humble and too ignorant for self-examination, for subtle analysis. He loved, and he did not comprehend the meaning of the word! Even the wisest fail to solve the mysteries of the heart.

Although the veteran seaman was too ignorant of

love rightly to characterize his passion, it was nevertheless a true one. It was not the feeling of a father, nor of a companion, nor yet that of a servant, though it partook in some measure of all three. That was an evidence of the genuineness of his feeling. Nothing noble, no feeling that is high, self-sacrificing, devoted, is foreign to love that is true, and love is the most comprehensive of the passions—it is a complete obsession. Captain Barry would have given his soul for Emily Sanford's happiness, and rejoiced in the bestowal.

He cherished no hopes, held no aspirations, dreamed no dreams concerning any future relationship. He was just possessed with an inexplicable feeling for her. A feeling that expected nothing, that asked nothing, that hoped for nothing but the steady happiness of being near her. To be in sight, in sound, in touch, that was all, that was enough. The sea in calmer mood gives no suggestion of potential storms. Barry's love was the acme of self-abnegation. If he had ever reached the covetous point he would have realized that she was not for him. He never did.

He loved her with a love beside which even his devotion to the old admiral, the passionate affection he bore for the old ship, were trifles. The girl had grown into his heart. Many a time he had carried her about in his arms when she was a baby. He had played with her as a child; she could always call a smile to his lips; he had cared for her as a young girl, he had served her as a woman.

He, too, had been happy to contribute to her edu-

cation as he had been able. There was a full-rigged model of the *Susquehanna* in her room in the white house. He had made it for her. It was a perfect replica, complete, finished in every detail ; so the ship might have looked if she had ever been put in commission. Emily knew every rope, every sheet, line, and brace upon it. She could knot and splice, box the compass, and every sailor's weather rhyme was familiar to her. She could handle a sail-boat as well as he, and with her strong young arms pulled a beautiful man-o'-war stroke. He had taught her all these things. When study hours were over and play-time began, the two together had explored the coast-line for miles in every direction.

So far as possible he had gratified every wish that she expressed. If a flower grew upon the face of an inaccessible cliff and she looked at it with a carelessly covetous glance, he got it for her, even at the risk of his life. He followed her about, when she permitted, as a great Newfoundland dog might have done, and was ever ready at her beck and call. His feeling towards her was of so exalted a character that he never ventured upon the slightest familiarity ; he would have recoiled from such an idea ; yet had there been any to mark, they might have seen him fondle the hem of her dress, lay his bronzed cheek upon her footprint in the sands, when he could do so without her knowing it.

There was no man in the village with whom Emily could associate on terms of equality. The admiral had come from a proud old family, and all its pride of

birth and station was concentrated in his last descendant. Simply as she had been reared, she could not stoop to association with any beneath the best; it was part of her grandfather's training. He was of a day when democratic iconoclasm was confined to state papers, and aristocracy still ruled the land by right divine, even though the forms of government were ostensibly republican. There were some quaint old novels in the library, which the girl had read and re-read, however, and, as she was a woman, she had dreamed of love and lovers from over the sea, and waited.

Her life, too, had been bound up with the ship. Not that she feared an end when it ended, but she often wondered what would happen to her when it fell. What would she do when the admiral was gone? And Captain Barry also? Who would take care of her then? What would her life be in that great world of which she dreamed beyond that sparkling wave-lit circle of the horizon? Who would care for her then? That lover who was coming? Ah, well, time would bring him. Somewhere he lived, some day he would appear. With the light-heartedness of youth she put the future by and lived happily, if expectantly, in the present.

CHAPTER IV

Cast up by the Sea

ONE early autumn evening in 1865 the sun sank dull and coppery behind banks of black clouds which held ominous portent of a coming storm. The old admiral sat in a large arm-chair on the porch leaning his chin upon his cane, peering out toward the horizon where the distant waters already began to crisp and curl in white froth against the blackness beyond. Emily, a neglected book in her lap, sat on the steps of the porch at his feet, idly gazing seaward. The sharp report of the sunset gun on the little platform on the brow of the hill had just broken the oppressive stillness which preceded the outburst of the tempest.

Having carefully secured the piece with the thoroughness of a seaman to whom a loose gun is a potential engine of terrible destruction, Barry ran rapidly down the hill, clambered up on the high poop of the ship, and hauled down the colors. As the flag, looking unusually bright and brave against the dark background of the cloud-shrouded sky, came floating down, the admiral rose painfully to his feet and bared his gray hairs in reverent salute. Emily had been

trained like the rest, and, following the admiral's example, she laid aside her book and stood gracefully erect, buoyant, and strong by her grandfather's side.

Old age and bright youth, the past with its history, memories, and associations, the future with all its possibilities and dreams, alike saluted the flag.

They made a pretty picture, thought Captain Barry, as he unbent the flag, belayed the halliards, and gathered up the folds of bunting upon the deck, rolling the colors into a small bundle which he placed in a chest standing against the rail at the foot of the staff. It was a nightly ceremony which had not been intermitted since the two came to the Point. Sometimes the admiral was unable to be present when the flag was formally hoisted in the morning, but it was rare indeed that night, however inclement the weather, did not find him on the porch at evening colors.

The smoke of the discharge and the faint acrid smell of the powder—both pleasant to the veterans—yet lingered in the still air as Barry came up the hill. He stopped before the foot of the porch, stood with his legs far apart, as if balancing to the roll of a ship, knuckled his forehead in true sailor-like fashion, and solemnly reported that the colors were down. The admiral acknowledged the salute and, in a voice still strong in spite of his great age, followed it with his nightly comment and question:

"Ay, Barry, and handsomely done. How is the ship?"

"She's all right, your honor."

"Nothing more gone?"

"No, sir."

"I thought I heard a crash last night in the gale."

"Not last night, sir. Everything's all ship-shape, leastways just as it was since that last piece of the to'gallant fo'k'sl was carried away last week."

"That's good, Barry. I suppose she's rotting though, still rotting."

"Ay, ay, sir, she is; an' some of the timbers you can stick your finger into."

"But she's sound at the heart, Captain Barry," broke in Emily, cheerily.

"Sound at the heart, Miss Emily, and always will be, I trust."

"Ay, lassie," said the old admiral, "we be all sound at the heart, we three; but when the dry rot gets into the timber, sooner or later the heart is bound to go. Now, to-night, see yonder, the storm is approaching. How the wind will rack the old timbers! I lie awake o' nights and hear it howling around the corners of the house and wait for the sound of the crashing of the old ship. I've heard the singing of the breeze through the top-hamper many a time, and have gone to sleep under it when a boy; but the wind here, blowing through the trees and about the ship, gets into my very vitals. Some of it will go to-night, and I shall be nearer the snug harbor aloft in the morning."

"Oh, don't say that, grandfather! Sound at the heart, the old ship will brave many a tempest, and you will, as well."

"Ay, girl, but not many like yonder brewing storm.

Old things are for still days, not for tempests. What think ye of the prospect, Barry?"

"It's got an ugly look, your honor, in the nor'west. There's wind a plenty in them black clouds. I wish we'd a good frigate under us and plenty o' sea room. I lies on the old ship sometimes an' feels her shiver in the gale as if she was ashamed to be on shore. That'll be a hard blow, sir."

"Ay," said the admiral, "I remember it was just such a night as this once when I commanded the *Columbus*. She was a ship-of-the-line, Emily, pierced for one hundred guns, and when we came into the Mediterranean Admiral Dacres told me that he had never seen such a splendid ship. I was uneasy and could not sleep,—good captains sleep lightly, child,—so I came on deck about two bells in the mid-watch. Young Farragut, God bless him! was officer of the watch. The night was calm and quiet but very dark. It was black as pitch off to starboard. There was not a star to be seen. 'Mr. Farragut,' I said, 'you'd better get the canvas off the ship.' Just then a little puff struck me in the cheek, and there was a sort of a deep sigh in the still night. Barry, your father, old John, was at the wheel, and a better hand at steering a ship I never saw. 'Call all hands, sir,' I said, sharply, 'we've no time to spare,' and by gad, —excuse me, Emily,—we'd no more than settled away the halliards when the squall struck us. If it hadn't been for the quick handling and ready seamanship of that youngster, and I saw that he was master of the thing and let him have his own

way, we'd have gone down with all standing. As it was——"

The speech of the old man was interrupted by a vivid flash of lightning, followed by a distant clap of thunder. In another moment the black water of the lake was churned into foam, and the wind swept upon them with the violence of a hurricane. As soon as the storm burst forth, Barry sprang upon the porch to assist the old admiral into the house.

"No," he said; "I'm feeling rather well this evening. Let me face the storm awhile. Fetch me my heavy cloak. That's well. Now pull the chair forward where I can get it full and strong. How good it feels! 'Tis like old times, man. Ah, if there were only a touch of salt in the gale!"

Closely wrapped in a heavy old-fashioned boat cloak which Barry brought him, he sat down near the railing of the porch, threw up his old head, and drank in the fresh gale with long breaths which brought with them pleasant recollections. The sailor stood on one side of the veteran, Emily on the other; youth and strength, man and woman, at the service of feeble age.

"See the ship!" muttered the old man; "how she sways, yet she rides it out! Up with the helm!" he cried, suddenly, as if she were in a seaway with the canvas on her. "Force your head around to it, ye old witch! Drive into it! You're good for many a storm yet. Bless me," he added, presently, "I forgot; yet 'tis still staunch. Ha, ha! Sound at the heart, and will weather many a tempest yet!"

"Oh, grandfather, what's that?" cried the girl; "look yonder!"

She left the side of the admiral, sprang to the edge of the porch, and pointed far out over the lake. A little sloop, its mainsail close reefed, was beating in toward the harbor. The twilight had so far faded in the storm that at the distance from them the boat then was they could scarcely distinguish more than a slight blur of white upon the water. But, flying toward them before the storm, she was fast rising into view.

"Where is it, child?" asked the old man, looking out into the growing darkness.

"There! Let your eye range across the ship; there, beyond the Point. She's running straight upon the sunken rocks."

"I sees it, Miss Emily," cried Barry, shading his eyes with his hand; "'tis a yacht, the mains'l's close reefed. She looks like a toy. There's a man in it. He's on the port tack, thinkin' to make the harbor without goin' about."

"He'll never do it," cried the girl, her voice shrill with apprehension. "He can't see the sunken ledge running out from the Point. He's a stranger to these waters, evidently."

"I see him, too," said the admiral. "God, what a storm! How he handles that boat! The man's a sailor, every inch of him!"

The cutter was nearer now, so near that the man could easily be seen. She was coming in with racing speed in spite of her small spread of canvas. The

lake was roaring all about her and the wind threatened to rip the mast out of the little boat, but the man held her up to it with consummate skill, evidently expecting to gain an entrance to the harbor, where safety lay, on his present tack. This he could easily have done had it not been for a long, dangerous ledge of sunken rocks which extended out beyond Ship House Point. Being under water, it gave little sign of its presence to a mariner until one was right upon it. In his excitement the admiral scrambled to his feet, stepped to the rail of the porch, and stood leaning over it. Presently he hollowed his hand and shouted with a voice of astonishing power for so old a man :

"Down with your helm, boy ! Hard down !"

But the stranger, of course, could not hear him, and the veteran stood looking with a grave frown upon his face as that human life, down on the waters beneath him, struggled for existence. It was not the first time he had watched life trembling in the balance —no ; nor seen it go in the end. Emily's voice broke in murmurs of prayer, while Barry stared like the admiral.

Presently the man in the boat glanced up and caught sight of the party. He was very near now and coming on gallantly. He waved his hand, and was astonished to see them frantically gesture back at him. A warning ! What could their movements mean ?

He peered ahead into the growing darkness ; the way seemed to be clear, yet something was evidently

wrong. What could it be? Ah! He could not weather the Point. With a seaman's quick decision, he jammed the helm over.

"Oh, grandfather!" screamed Emily in the old man's ear; "can't something be done?"

"Nothing, child; nothing! He can't hear, he can't see, he does not know."

"It's awful to see him rush smilingly down to certain death!" exclaimed the girl, wringing her hands. "Captain Barry, can't you do something?"

"There goes his helm," said the admiral; "he realizes it at last. About he goes! Too late! too late!"

"Oh, Captain Barry, you must do something!" cried Emily.

"There's nothin' to do, Miss Emily."

"Yes, there is. We'll get the boat," she answered, springing from the steps as she spoke and running down the hill like a young fawn. The sailor instantly followed her, and in a moment they disappeared under the lee of the ship.

CHAPTER V

The Rescue

AS the practised eye of the admiral had seen, the tiny yacht was too near the rocks to go about and escape them. She was caught in the trough of the sea before she had gathered way on the other tack, and flung upon the sunken ledge, broadside on. The mast snapped like a pipe-stem. After a few violent shocks she was hurled over on her beam ends, lodged securely on the rocks, and began to break up under the beating of the angry sea. A few moments and she would be beaten to pieces. The man was still there, however, the water breaking over him. He seemed to have been hurt, but clung tenaciously to the wreck of the boat until he recovered himself a little, and then rose slowly and stood gazing upon the tossing waters, seething and whirling about the wreck of his boat.

There was, during high winds, a dangerous whirlpool right in front of the reefs and extending between them and the smooth waters of the harbor. The water was beating over the rocks and fairly boiling before him. A man could not swim through it; could, indeed, scarcely enter it and live—even a

boat would find it difficult, if not impossible. Things looked black to the shipwrecked man. He stood in hopeless hesitation, doom reaching for him on either hand. He could neither go nor stay with safety. Yet he apparently made up his mind at last to go and die, if need be, struggling.

"Don't try the whirlpool, boy," said the admiral softly to himself, as he looked down upon the scene. "You could never make it in this sea. Say a prayer, lad; 'tis all that is left you. By heaven! A noble girl, my own child! And a brave oar, too! Steady, Barry, steady! Don't come too near! Your skiff can't live in such a sea. Merciful God! can they do it?" continued the veteran, as the light skiff shot out from the lee of the Point and, with Barry at the oars and Emily at the helm, cautiously made its way toward the whirlpool.

The instant they got out from the lee of the Point the full force of the storm struck them, although they were still within the shelter of the harbor. But they struggled through it, for a stronger pair of arms never pulled oars and more skilful hands than those on that little skiff never guided a boat. Barry's strokes were as steady and powerful as if he had been a steam propeller, and not even the admiral himself could have steered the boat with greater dexterity than did the girl.

The man on the wrecked cutter saw them when the admiral did. Evidently he was a sailor, too, for he knew exactly what they intended to do. The two on the boat brought the skiff as near the rocks where the

wreck of the cutter lay as they dared,—they were almost in the whirlpool, in fact,—and then Emily, gathering the yoke-lines in her left hand, with the other signalled him to jump. Nodding his head, he leaped far out over the whirling waves toward the boat. It was his only chance.

"A gallant lad, a brave boy!" exclaimed the admiral, as he saw the man spring from the wreck. "I believe they'll save him yet. No, by heavens! he's struck on one of the reefs! Is he gone? He rises! He's in the whirlpool! He strikes out feebly; the waves go over his head! No, he rises again! They have him! Well done, Emily; well pulled, Barry!"

Taking a desperate chance, the girl, seeing that the man was practically helpless, for he was swimming feebly and apparently scarcely able to keep his head up, boldly sheered the boat into the whirlpool and then turned her about. The man, retaining his self-possession, seized the stern with his uninjured hand. Emily leaned down and caught him by the coat collar, and then Barry pulled his strongest to escape from the twisting grip of the little maelstrom.

Emily steered the boat with one hand and with the other held on to the stranger. It was, of course, impossible to get him into the boat. Presently he fainted and hung a dead weight on her arm. The admiral watched them, praying fervently for their success. It was a terrible pull for the old sailor and a terrible strain on the young woman. Again and again she thought she would have to release the man

The girl boldly sheered the boat into the whirlpool

dragging astern. Her arm was almost jerked from her body, yet she held on with grim determination, steering the boat as best she could with her single hand.

Barry pulled until the sweat beaded his forehead. His muscles stood out like whipcords. For a few moments he feared that he could not do it; but he looked at the resolute figure in the stern-sheets, the girl he loved, and that nerved his arms. Presently —and it seemed hours to both—he got the boat out of the whirlpool and into the comparatively smooth water under the lee of the Point. After a few weary strokes the keel grated upon the shore.

The sailor stepped out, made fast the painter, waded back to where the man lay in the water, lifted him up with the assistance of Emily, and slowly made his way up the hill, carrying him in his arms.

CHAPTER VI

The Water-Witch

WE have a deeper sense of proprietorship in a thing we have earned by hard labor or gained by the exercise of our abilities than in that which has been given to us, has cost us nothing.

As Emily, walking close by Barry's side, giving him such assistance as was possible, looked with mingled pity and anxiety upon the white face of the man hanging limply back over the arms of the sailor, she was conscious that in her soul had arisen a new and curious sense of ownership in humanity,—the most satisfactory, yet disappointing, of our possessions. A strange and indefinable feeling surged in her breast as she thought hurriedly of the situation. A budding relationship—the deep relationship of services rendered, in fact—attached her inevitably to this stranger—if he were yet alive.

She flushed at the feeling, as if her privacy had been invaded, as she gazed upon him. Her thoughts ran riot in her bosom, her soul turning toward him, helpless, unconscious, water dripping from his torn, sodden clothing. Perhaps he was dead or dying.

The thought gave her a sudden constriction of the heart. That would be untoward fate surely. It could not be.

She had saved him. The weak woman had been strong. Her heart leaped exultingly at that. He was hers by the divine right of service. The strange relationship had suddenly become a fact to her. Her arm still ached with the strain of holding him, yet she was glad of the pain. It was the inward and spiritual evidence of her ownership in that she had found and brought to shore. If he would only live!

As they walked she prayed.

She was not in love with him, of course,—not yet,—and yet she could scarcely analyze—hardly comprehend—her feelings. Her mind was in a whirl. Faint, exhausted physically, she did not yet see clearly. But he was there. She had brought him. This human bit of flotsam was hers—but for her he would have gone down forever in the dark waters. If he lived, what things might be? What might come? She admitted nothing, even to herself.

It was some distance from the landing-place to the top of the hill, and although the man they had rescued, albeit tall, was a slender young fellow, yet as the sailor toiled up the well-worn path he felt the weight of the inert body growing greater with every ascending step. Perhaps it would not have been so had he not previously exhausted himself in the desperate pull to gain the shore; but when at last he reached the porch, he felt that it would have been impossible for him to have carried his burden another

pace. Indeed, had it not been for the assistance Emily had given him, he could not have managed it without a stop or two for rest. But he had plunged blindly on, something—an instinct of the future, perhaps—bidding him rid himself without delay of the growing oppression of his incubus. Not Sindbad had been more anxious to throw off his old man of the sea than he to cast down the man.

And Barry and Emily began to play at cross-purposes from that hour.

The man saved so hardly had as yet given no sign of life. When the three reached the porch, the sailor laid him down at the admiral's feet and stood panting, sweat beading on his bronzed brow. The old man, still wrapped in his cloak, stood on the steps, careless alike of the rising wind or the rain which had begun to fall.

"Well done!" he cried, extending his hand to them, as the sailor deposited his burden. "I never saw a boat better handled, girl! 'Twas a gallant rescue, Barry!"

"Oh, grandfather!" cried Emily, too anxious to heed approval, even from such a source; "is he dead, do you think?"

"I hope not; but we'll soon see. Call the servants, Emily. Barry, lift him up again and take him into my room."

"No, mine," exclaimed Emily, as she ran to call assistance. "I won't have you disturbed, and mine is right off the hall here."

"Very well. Lay him on the floor, Barry. And, Emily, bring me my flask. Bear a hand, all."

Presently the man was stretched out upon a blanket thrown upon the floor of Emily's room

Presently the man was stretched out upon a blanket thrown upon the floor of Emily's room, and the admiral knelt down by his side. He felt over him with his practised fingers, murmuring the while :

"No bones broken apparently. I guess he'll be all right. Have you the flask there, daughter? This will bring him around, I trust," he added, as he poured the restoring liquid down the man's throat. "Barry, go you for Dr. Wilcox as quick as you can. Present my compliments to him, and ask him to come here at once. Shake a leg, man! Emily, loosen the man's collar—your fingers are younger than mine—and give him another swallow. He's worth a dozen dead men yet, I'm sure."

As he spoke the admiral rose to his feet and gave place to Emily. Very gently the girl did as the old man bade her, and presently the man extended before her opened his eyes and stared up at her vacantly, wonderingly, for a few moments at first, and then, with a dawning light of recognition in his eyes, he smiled faintly as he remembered. His first words might have been considered flippant, unworthy of the situation, but to the girl they seemed not inappropriate.

"The blue-eyed water-witch!" he murmured. "To be saved by you," he continued, half jestingly,—it was a brave heart which could find place for pleasantry then, she thought,—"and then to find you smiling above me."

At these whispered words what he still lacked in color flickered into Emily's face, and as he gazed steadily upon her, the flicker became a flame which

suffused her cheeks. He had noticed her even in those death-fronting moments on the wreck.

"Are you better now?" she asked him in her confusion.

"Better, miss?" he answered, softly, yet not striving to rise; "I am well again. I came down to——"

"Silence, lad, silence fore and aft! Belay all until the surgeon comes, and you shall tell us all about it then," interrupted the admiral. "He'll be here in a moment now, I think, if Barry have good luck. Will you have another swallow of whiskey?"

"No, sir, thank you; I've had enough."

At that moment the sailor entered the hall, fairly dragging the fat little doctor in his wake.

"I fell foul of him just outside of the yard, your honor," said Barry, as he appeared in the door-way.

"'Fell foul of me!' I should think you did! You fell on me like a storm," cried the doctor, dropping his wet cloak in the passage-way and bustling into the room. "What is it, admiral? Are you——?"

"I'm all right, doctor."

"It's not Miss Emily?"

"No, sir; I'm all right, too; but——"

"Oho!" said the doctor, his glance at last falling to the man extended on the floor; "this is the patient, is it? Well, young man, you look rather damp, I am sure. What's up?"

"Nothing seems to be up, sir," answered the man, smilingly, amusedly. "I seem to be down, though."

"I guess you're in pretty good shape, sir," said

the doctor, laughingly, "if you can joke about it; and if you are down now, we'll soon have you up."

As he spoke, the physician knelt and examined his patient carefully.

"How did it happen, Miss Emily?" he asked, as he proceeded with his investigations.

"Why, doctor, we picked him up out of the water."

"We?"

"Yes, sir. Captain Barry and I."

"My sloop was wrecked on the rocks beyond the old ship," said the young man; "and when this young lady came along in a boat I jumped, and as I am not quite recovered from a wound I got at Mobile Bay, I suppose I lost consciousness from the shock. I'm all right now, though."

"I think so, too," said the doctor; "we'll get these wet clothes off you in a jiffy, and then I'll give you something, and in the morning you'll hardly know you've been in danger."

"I shall never forget that I was in danger this time, sir," said the young man, addressing the doctor, but looking fixedly at the young girl.

"No, of course not; but why particularly at this time?"

"Because I was saved by——"

"Oh, that's it, is it? Faith, I'd be willing to be half drowned myself to be saved in that way. Meanwhile, do you withdraw, Miss Emily, and we'll get him ready for bed. Where is he to lie?"

"Here," said the girl.

"In your room?"

"Certainly."

"I protest, sir," said the man, sitting up with astonishing access of vigor.

"Nobody protests when Miss Emily commands anything. Here you'll stay, sir!" said Barry, gruffly, as the girl left the room.

The doctor and the sailor soon tucked him away in bed, the admiral looking on. As they undressed him they noticed a long scar across his breast where a shell from Fort Morgan had keeled him over. The doctor examined it critically.

"That was a bad one," he said, touching the wound deftly with his pudgy yet knowing finger. "That'll be the one you spoke of, I take it?"

"Yes, sir," answered the young man; "it's been a long time in healing. I feel the effect of it yet sometimes."

"But you'll get over it in time, young man, I'm thinking," said the kindly little country doctor.

"I hope so, sir."

The patient was thin and pale from the effects of the wound, which, as he said, had been a long time healing. It was evident that he had not yet recovered his strength or his weight, either, or the burden on Captain Barry would have been heavier than it was.

"Did you say," said the admiral, as they prepared to leave him, "that you had been at Mobile Bay?"

"Yes, sir."

"What ship were you on?"

"The *Hartford*, sir."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the old man; "with Dave Farragut?"

"Yes, sir; I had that honor."

"Why, I knew that boy when he was a midshipman. I——"

"Now, admiral, excuse me for giving commands in your presence, but you know there are times when the doctor rules the ship. This young man must be left alone, and, after the excitement, I think you had better go to bed—excuse me, I mean turn in—yourself," interposed the physician, peremptorily.

"Hark to the storm!" said the old man, turning to the window, his thoughts diverted for the moment from the accident and his guest—it needed but little to turn his mind to the ship at any time or under any circumstances. "Mark the flash of the lightning, hear the thunder, doctor! She'll be sore racked to-night!"

He peered anxiously out into the darkness over the Point.

"Come, come, admiral."

"Nay, sir. I must wait for another flash to see whether the old ship still stands. Ay, there she is! Well, 'twill not be long; and were it not for Emily, I'd say, thank God! Good-night, lad. A boy with Farragut, and he a boy with me! Well, well! Good-night; sleep well, sir."

Long time the veteran lay awake listening to the wind and waiting for the crash of the ship. And in the room above, where the servants had made a bed

for Emily, another kept sleepless watch, though she thought but little of the storm; or, if she did, it was with thankfulness for what it had brought her.

How handsome he had looked, even with that death-like pallor upon his brown sunburnt cheek, as she had knelt beside him! Had the waves of the tempest indeed brought the long-expected, long-dreamed-of lover to her feet? And he was a sailor; he had been with Farragut; he had been wounded in the service of his country—a hero! And what had he said? "Saved by a blue-eyed water-witch!" How delightful to think on! And he would never forget the rescue because she had done it! He jested, surely; yet could the words be true?

How different he was from the young men of the village! Even the few officers of the different detachments of volunteers which had successively garrisoned the fort were not as he. How different from Captain Barry, too—alas, poor old sailor! Her grandfather, now, might have been like him when he was younger.

What a storm it was! How the wind howled around the corners of the house! What had he come there for? Strangers rarely visited the quiet little town. What business or pleasure had brought him to the village? Was the ship braving the storm? If the ship went down, her grandfather would go, too, and perhaps Captain Barry. Who would care for her then? What was that young man's name? Pity he had not mentioned it. "A blue-eyed water-witch!"

She drifted off to sleep.

Down upon the deck of the old ship, heedless of

the storm, Captain Barry paced restlessly up and down. What had he done it for? What fool's impulse had made him obey her sharp command? 'Twas his arm that had held the boat under iron control; 'twas his powerful stroke that had brought it near enough to enable the man to make the leap with the chance of safety; and he had carried him up the hill. The increasing weight of the incumbrance but typified the growing heaviness of his heart. The man was one of the admiral's class,—a gentleman, an officer, a man who had been wounded in the service of his country, a hero. How he had stared at Emily when his senses came back to him! He, Barry, was only a common sailor, a blue-jacket, the admiral's servitor, Miss Emily's dog, old enough to be her father,—a fool!

He stood up in the darkness and stretched out his arms to heaven,—what voiceless, wordless prayer in his lonely old heart? The storm beat full upon him. His mind was filled with foreboding, regret, jealousy, anguish. Why had the man come there? Was it for Emily? What should any man come there for if not for her?

But, stay; he was a sailor. Perhaps he had come for the ship! The war was over, retrenchment the cry. Poor Barry had heard strange rumors. There was no sleep for him that night.

CHAPTER VII

The Home of the Sea-Maiden

MR. RICHARD REVERE was a young lieutenant in the navy of the United States. He came of an ancient and honorable family, possessed of wealth and station. He had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1863, and, by an act of daring gallantry in cutting out a blockade-runner, had easily won a lieutenant's commission. When Farragut sailed into Mobile Bay on that hot August morning in 1864, the young man stood on the deck by his side. A Blakely shell from Fort Morgan had seriously wounded him, and this wound, coupled with a long siege of fever subsequently, had almost done for him.

Although over a year had elapsed since that eventful day, he had by no means regained his strength, although he seemed now on the fair road to recovery. Anxious to be on duty again after this long period of enforced idleness, he had recently applied for orders, and had been detailed to proceed to Lake Ontario and make arrangements for the sale, or other disposal, of the *Susquehanna*. His mother owned a cottage on one of the Thousand Isles, and the distance was, therefore, inconsiderable. When the orders had

reached him there, he determined to sail down to Sewell's Harbor in a little yacht which he had chartered for lake cruising, instead of taking the longer and more tedious journey by land.

He had reached his destination in the way which has been told. It was imprudent in him to have attempted to make the mouth of an unknown harbor in such a storm, and he had nearly paid the penalty for his folly with his life. Exhausted by his adventure, he fell speedily into a sound and refreshing slumber, his last thought being of the radiant face bowed over him when he had opened his eyes in the very room in which he now sought rest.

He awoke in the morning feeling very much better. On a chair opposite the bed lay a suit of clothes. He glanced at the garments curiously and observed that they were the different articles of a blue-jacket's uniform. They evidently belonged to that sailor-man who had assisted in his rescue. They were new and spotlessly neat; certainly his best suit. His own uniform was nowhere to be seen. It must have been badly torn and, of course, thoroughly soaked by his adventure. His clothes, probably, were not yet fit to put on. If he were to get up at all he must make use of these. Well, it would not be the first time that he had worn a seaman's clothes. They reminded him of his cadet days, and so he arose, somewhat painfully be it known, and dressed himself, curiously surveying the room as he did so.

It was a strange room, he thought, for a young girl, as he remembered that it belonged to her. Her?

How indefinite that was! He wished he knew her name. He wondered whether it were beautiful enough to be appropriate. He hoped so. The chamber was not at all like that of a young woman. For instance, there was a deadly looking harpoon standing in the corner. He picked up the sinister weapon and examined it.

"Queer toy, that thing, for a girl," he murmured; "quite a proper weapon for a whaler, though."

Its barbs were as sharp and keen as a razor. On the wooden staff the letters "J. B." were roughly carved. Were those her initials? Pshaw, of course not! But whose? He experienced quite a thrill of—it could not be jealousy! That was absurd.

"What's this? A model of a ship. By Jove! I believe it's the old *Susquehanna* herself,—the ship I am come to sell! And here's a shark's tooth rudely carved. Oars in the other corner, too. And a fish-net and lines! This bunch of wild flowers, though, and the contents of this bureau mark the woman; but I'm blessed if there isn't a boatswain's call, laniard and all! That's about the prettiest laniard I ever saw," he continued, critically examining the knots and strands and Turk's heads. "Have I stumbled into Master Jack's quarters by mistake, or —oh, I see how it is. I suppose that old sailor has loaded her with these treasures. He probably adores her—who could help it? And the admiral, too. Now, what's this, I wonder? What a queer-looking sword!"

He lifted up the weapon, which lay on a wooden

shelf between the windows, crossed pistols of ancient make hanging above it beneath a fine old painting of a handsome young naval officer, in the uniform of a captain of the 1812 period. The leather scabbard was richly and artistically mounted in silver, but the hilt was a rough piece of unpolished, hammered iron. He drew the weapon from the sheath. The blade was of the most exquisite quality, beautifully chased, a rare bit of Toledo steel, handsome enough to throw a connoisseur into ecstasy. He tested it, cautiously at first, and then boldly; it was a magnificent weapon, tempered to perfection. Such a blade as a king or conqueror might have wielded,—and yet, that coarse iron hilt! What could it mean? He thrust it back reverently into its scabbard and laid it down, and then completed his toilet.

When he was dressed, he took a long look at himself in the little, old-fashioned mirror swinging between two lyre-shaped standards on the dresser, and smiled at the picture. In height he was, perhaps, as tall as the sailor, but in bulk there was no comparison. He laughed at the way the clothes hung about him. Yet the dashing, jaunty uniform was not ill adapted to set off his handsome face. It was complete, even to sheath-knife and belt. On the chair lay the flat cap, bearing on its ribbon, in letters of gold, the name *Susquehanna.* He put the cap on and went out on the porch.

Captain Barry was standing at the foot of the steps leading from the porch, looking at the ship. It was early morning.

"My man," said the young officer, meaning to be entirely friendly and cordial, as he was profoundly grateful, yet unable entirely to keep the difference of rank and station out of his voice and manner,—a condescension which irritated the sailor beyond expression. They were both dressed exactly alike, and certainly physically the older was the better man. He had lived long enough in the society of the girl and the old man to have developed some of the finer feelings of his nature, too. He shook himself angrily, therefore, as the other spoke.

"My man, you lay me under double obligation. You and your golden-haired mistress presented me with my life last night, and now you 'paint the lily'—gad, that's a good simile, isn't it?" he chuckled to himself—"by giving me your clothes. How am I to acquit myself of all I owe you?"

"Sir," said the old man, grimly, knuckling his forehead, with a sea-scrape of his foot, more as a matter of habit than as a token of respect, "you owe me nothing."

He turned abruptly, and went around the house without looking back.

"Queer duck, that," soliloquized the young man, staring after him in amazement; "seems to be mad about something. Mad at me, perhaps. I wonder why? Well, those old shell-backs are apt to take quaint notions. Never mind; let him do what he likes. Where would you be, Mr. Dick Revere, if it had not been for him and the girl? How funny I must look, though! I wonder whether the apparel

becomes the man? I flatter myself I have given the proper hitch to the tie. It is 'a touch of wild civility that doth bewitch me,'" he quoted. "I wish I had brought that bo's'n's whistle out. I'd like to sound a call or two."

He drifted off into a brown study, thinking hard in this manner.

"I wonder what Josephine would say if she could see me now? Is all our difference of rank but a matter of uniform? By Jove! I forgot all about her. I don't believe I've thought of her since I left them; yet, if the novels are right, I should have been thinking of her when I stood on the deck of the yacht expecting every moment would be my last. I was thinking of that girl in the boat, though. Wasn't she splendid? Plucky, pretty—well! Gracious me, Richard Revere, at the age of twenty-four you are surely not going to fall in love with the first woman you see, especially since you have been engaged to Josephine Remington pretty much ever since you were born,—or ever since she was born, which was four years later. But I swear I'd give a year of Josephine's cold, classic, beautiful regularity for a minute of—pshaw, don't be a fool! I'll go and look at the yacht. I wonder whether anything's left of her? Nobody would think there had been a storm of any kind to look at the lake to-day. What a lovely morning!"

Indeed, the wind had gone down to a gentle breeze, and the surface of the lake was tossing in thousands of merry little waves, their white crests sparkling in the sunlight.

"The old ship is still standing," he continued, soliloquizing again, as he walked toward the bluff. "I suppose it will come awfully hard on the old man when he finds out that the government is going to sell her. What did they tell me his name was? Somebody or other distinguished; I forget who. Must have been a fine old chap in his day. What was it he said when he looked out of the window before he bade me good-night? This is going to be rather a tough sort of a job, I'm afraid, and I don't half like it."

He had reached the hill by this time, and, feeling a little tired, he sat down on the steps overlooking the sea. There, below him on the Point, stood the ship-of-the-line. An imposing picture, indeed. He had been too busy the night before to notice it. He stared at it with growing interest, and a feeling of pity, for whom, for what, he could scarcely say, slowly rose in his heart.

"Poor old ship!" he murmured.

A ragged mass of fallen timber on the lee side proclaimed that some portion of her had been carried away during the storm of the night,—and she had little left to spare. There, too, on the reef beyond, were the remains of the *Josephine*, battered into a shapeless ruin.

"Well, that was a close shave; the *Josephine* will never carry sail again. What melancholy pictures!" he said, thoughtfully; "poor little boat, too! I've had many a good time on her, and now I—— But I'd cheerfully give a dozen yachts," he continued, with the reckless hyperbole of youth, "to be rescued by——"

CHAPTER VIII

"Old Ironsides"

THE continuity of his thought was suddenly broken. A beautiful hand, of exquisite touch, sunburned, but shapely, delicate, but strong, was laid lightly on his shoulder. He glanced down at it, thrilled!

"Captain Barry," exclaimed a fresh, clear young voice, which in perfection matched the hand, "have you looked to the comfort of our guest? Oh, sir, I beg your pardon. I thought——" she cried in dismay, as Revere rose to his feet and bowed low before her.

"May I answer your question? He has, as these clothes, which account for your mistake, will witness."

"And are you well, sir? Are you none the worse for——?"

"Much the better, I should say," answered the young man, "since my adventure has gained me the privilege of your acquaintance."

"You might have had that without risking your life, sir," she responded, smiling.

"Not without risking my heart, I am sure," he replied, gallantly.

"What a strange way you have of addressing people!" she continued, looking at him so frankly and so innocently that he felt ashamed of himself. "Do you always talk in that way?"

"Well, not always," he replied, laughing; "but I jest——"

"Oh, it was only a jest, then," she interrupted, her heart sinking faintly.

"But I jest when I should be thanking you for giving me my life," he continued, disregarding her interruption. "You saved my life, Miss—— I do not know your name."

"I am Emily Sanford, the admiral's granddaughter."

"You saved my life, Miss Sanford."

"I don't believe I've ever been called 'Miss Sanford' in my life. How strange it sounds!" she exclaimed, naïvely. "Everybody here calls me 'Miss Emily.'"

"You will not find me unwilling, I am sure, to adopt the common practice," he exclaimed, lightly. "But, seriously, death never seemed nearer to me than it did last night, and I have been near it before, too. Had it not been for you——"

"And Captain Barry," she interrupted, quickly.

"Of course, for him, too, I'd not be here thanking you now."

"But it was nothing, after all; anybody could have done it."

"There I disagree with you. I am sailor enough to know that it was a most desperate undertaking.

You put your own life in hazard to save mine. If that old man had relaxed his efforts, if you had made a mistake with those yoke-lines,—well, there would have been three of us to go instead of one."

"Oh, hardly that."

"But I know, Miss Emily, and I cannot allow you to disparage your action so. 'Twas a most heroic thing, and I'm not worthy the risk and the effort."

"But you have been with Farragut; you were at Mobile Bay in the *Hartford;* you——"

"You did not know it then, surely?" in great surprise.

"I did not then; but since I did—as you persist in saying—save you, I am glad to know it now. But you have not told me your name."

"My name is Richard Revere. I am a lieutenant in the United States navy."

"How did you happen to come here?" curiously.

"I came about the ship."

"The ship?" she cried in alarm. "What of it?"

"I came to inspect it," he answered, evasively, something prompting him that he was getting in dangerous waters.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, greatly relieved; "I thought you might have come to destroy it, or to dispose of it. You see, it would be the death of grandfather if anything should happen to the old ship, and it would kill the old sailor, too; and then what would become of me?"

Her frankness delighted him. An answer trembled

on the tip of his tongue, but by a great effort he restrained his inclination and questioned her.

"Have you no relatives, no friends?"

"No relatives at all except grandfather," she answered, freely and frankly. "I have lived here since I was a baby with the admiral and Captain Barry. My mother died when I was an infant, and she was the only child of her mother. I haven't a connection in the world that I know of. Friends? Yes, everybody in the village is a friend of mine; but they are different, you know. I wonder sometimes what will happen when—they can't last much longer, you know, but God will take care of me," she continued, simply.

"And I, too," he murmured softly, in spite of himself.

"You!" she cried, surprised, turning her clear, splendid eyes toward him and confronting him in one unabashed glance. "What do you mean? I——"

"Never mind, Miss Emily," he answered, recovering himself again; "you are right. God will find some way, I doubt not. I only mean to say that if you ever need a friend, a real friend, you may count upon me and upon my mother. She owes you a son, you know, and I am sure she would gladly pay her debt in kindness to you."

Dangerous promises, Richard, so far as you are concerned, in spite of Plato; and few men there be who dare assume to speak for a woman, a mother, to a possible daughter-in-law!

His words were simple enough, but there was such intensity in the glance that accompanied them that

the girl, innocent though she was, shrank from it,—not with fear, but from the old, old instinct of woman that suggests flight when fain to be pursued.

"More of the ship went with the gale last night," she murmured, pointing; "see yonder. I think every gale that comes will be the last of her. Your boat is gone to pieces, too."

"I count it well lost," he replied, softly, "for it has brought me to you."

"You must not say that," she answered, gravely; "and I am forgetting my duty. Breakfast is nearly ready. I came to tell you. Will you come into the house?"

It was not the first time that a maiden forgot her duty—even in trifles like this—in the presence of a man she was beginning to love, nor would it be the last.

"Did you, then, do me the honor to seek me? I am delighted."

"At the prospect of breakfast?" she asked, smiling at him merrily.

"Of course. Did you ever see a sailor-man who wasn't?"

"The only sailor-men I know are my grandfather and Captain Barry. Grandfather cares nothing about it, but I must say that Captain Barry——"

"Does full justice to his rations, I doubt not. He looks like it. Well, I am only a lieutenant. I will follow the captain. May I help you up the hill?"

She laughed lightly at him.

"Why, Mr. Revere, I run up and down that hill a

dozen times a day, and I should think, after your battering of last night, you would rather depend upon me. Come, let us go."

They had gone but a few steps when an idea struck the lieutenant. He stopped, pressed his hand against his side, and gazed beseechingly at his companion.

"Oh, what is it?" she cried; "your wound? You ought not to have come out. What shall we do?"

"I am afraid," answered this mendacious deceiver; "I am sorry to trouble you, but I will have to be helped up the hill, after all. You see——"

"Of course, of course. How thoughtless of me! I'll call Captain Barry at once."

"Oh, no; that will be unnecessary. If you will give me your hand I think I can manage."

She extended her hand to him instantly with all the freedom of her character, and her ready offer shamed him again. His repentance of his subterfuge did not rise to the renunciation point, for it must be confessed that he seized the beautiful, sunburnt little hand with avidity, and clung to it as if he really craved assistance. She helped him religiously up the hill, and, as he showed no desire to relinquish her hand when they reached the top, she asked him if he did not feel able to walk alone now; and when he was forced to reply in the affirmative, she drew it gently away.

"You see," he said, "it was so delightful, I quite forgot."

"What was delightful?"

"To have reached the top of the hill; you know it

was so pleasant, I—I—forgot—I was holding your hand."

If Emily had been a modern young woman she might have asked him how he could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was holding her hand; but as his glance carried his meaning home to her she flushed deeply. The admiral's voice calling to them from the door-way put an end to a scene which was delightful to both of them.

On seeing the old man, the young man took off his cap and bowed respectfully.

"Sir," he said, "my name is Richard Revere."

"Are you related to Commodore Dick Revere of the old navy?"

"He was my grandfather, sir."

"I knew him well; I sailed on many a cruise with him. A gallant fellow, a loyal friend. I'm glad to meet you, sir. You are welcome."

"I have to thank you for your hospitality, sir, even as I thank your granddaughter for her heroic rescue of me last night."

"It was, indeed, nobly done, young sir, and I am glad that my child should have been of service to a grandson of Dick Revere, or to a friend of Dave Farragut. You were at Mobile, were you?"

"Yes, sir, and on the *Hartford*."

"I've seen many a battle in my day, young sir," said the old admiral, simply. "It was old-fashioned fighting then, yard-arm to yard-arm, but we went at it good and hard, and our hearts were in it, I doubt not, just as yours were."

"May I know your name, sir?"

"I am called Charles Stewart," responded the other.

"What?" cried the lieutenant. "Charles Stewart of the *Constitution?* The man who took the *Cyane* and the *Levant?*"

"The same, sir."

"Him they call 'Old Ironsides'?"

"I believe my countrymen do apply that name to me sometimes," replied the old man, smiling with pleasure at the hearty admiration of the younger.

"I am proud to know you, sir, and proud to see you. We of the new navy only hope that we may live up to the record you of the old made in the past, sir."

"You have more than done that," said the old man, heartily; "we had no better men than Farragut and young Porter. I sailed with old Porter, his father, many a time. I knew him well."

"But come, grandfather," said Emily, "breakfast is ready."

"A moment, child," said the old man, forgetting for the moment, apparently, his environment. "I must look at the ship. Good-morning, Barry," he continued, as the sailor approached him; "is it well with the ship?"

"A good piece of it went down last night, your honor, I'm sorry to say. It lies off on the port side, yonder, under the lee, but nothin' vital yet, sir."

"I did not think to see it this morning. Bit by bit it wears away. Well, please God, there will be an end some day."

CHAPTER IX

The Sword of the Constitution

CLOTHED in his own uniform, but hardly in his right mind, Mr. Richard Revere sat down late in the afternoon to consider the situation.

He had passed a delightfully idle day in the society of the admiral and his granddaughter; principally, it must be confessed, and in so far as he could contrive it, with the latter. Her cunning fingers had mended the rents in his uniform, which had been dried and put into a passably wearable condition. The versatility of her education and the variety of her accomplishments were evidenced to him when he saw that she wielded the needle as deftly as she steered the boat.

They had sat on the porch most of the time in the pleasant fall weather, and the dozing old admiral offered but little check to the freedom of their intercourse. In response to her insistent questioning, this young Telemachus, cast up by the sea at her feet, poured into the ear of this new Calypso stories of the naval battles in which he had participated and whose honorable scars he bore. Like Desdemona, she loved him for the dangers he had passed.

She was familiar with the history of the old navy, of which the admiral had been one of the brightest stars. Many a tale had the old man told her of storm and tempest, battle and triumph, shipwreck and disaster, and his own adventures and distinguished career she knew by heart. Although the great wave of the Civil War had ebbed and flowed far to the south of them, she and her grandfather had prayerfully and anxiously followed its mighty course, especially on the sea; yet it so happened that this was the first time that either of them had been brought in personal contact with its naval side. A returning volunteer, a wounded soldier,—for the little town had done its patriotic part with the rest,—had sometimes brought fresher news of the battles than might be read in the papers, but no sailor had come to tell them how Farragut had damned the torpedoes and steamed through the pass until Revere told the thrilling story of the immortal fight.

The admiral waked up while this was being recounted, and he pressed the young man with the keen questions of a veteran who knew well the sound of battle and had fronted the enemy undismayed. Even the story of the wound that disabled Revere must be told, in spite of his reluctance to mention it, and Emily dropped the needle and listened with bated breath to the simple and modest recital.

"Were you ever wounded, admiral?" questioned the young sailor, when he had finished his story.

"Never, by God's providence," said the old man; "though I came near to it once."

"And how was that, sir?"

"Well, sir, when the old *Constitution* took the *Cyane* and the *Levant*, a shot from the *Cyane* struck the hilt of my sword, carried it away, and slewed me about so that I thought for a moment that I had been hit in the side. It was a Spanish blade, and I prized it highly. I was lucky enough to give some succor to a Spanish brig in distress down in the West Indies on a certain occasion, years before, and His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain was pleased to present me with a sword for it, a beautiful Toledo blade, the finest sword I ever saw. It was richly hilted and scabbarded, as became such a weapon, and I always wore it in action. Of course, the hilt was ruined by the shot, and the armorer of the *Constitution* made a rude guard out of a piece of iron he took from the *Levant* after she struck, to replace the broken hilt, and I've never cared to change it since."

"I saw it this morning in Miss Emily's room," said Revere. "I took the liberty of examining it, and I was struck by the beauty of the blade and the roughness of the hilt. I quite agree with you, sir. I should not have it changed for anything."

"I call it the sword of the *Constitution*," said Emily.

"How comes it in your room, may I ask, Miss Emily?"

"Grandfather gave it to me. I am the only son of the house, you see," she continued with a melancholy sigh. "I would that I had been a man."

"That is a wish in which I cannot join you," said the young officer, quickly.

"I think it's a pity," responded the girl, "that so great and gallant a sailor as my grandfather should leave no one to bear his name."

"My dear young lady, his name is borne in our history and upon our hearts," answered Revere, quickly. "The world will never forget '*Old Ironsides*' and her last great fighting captain. The new navy is the child of the old, and, in a certain sense, we all feel the obligations of such distinguished ancestry. As for me, that I have been permitted to meet you, sir," he said, turning to the admiral, "in this intimate and familiar way, is one of the proudest moments of my life."

"Is it so?" said the old man, simply; "we only did our duty then, just as you are doing it now. Dave Farragut, now, he was trained in our school——"

"And we are trained in his school; so you see here is a connection. Some day we may show what we have learned from him, as he showed what he had learned from you."

"I doubt it not, young sir, I doubt it not; and while I have no sons or grandsons to bear my name, yet Emily is a good child. No one could wish for a better daughter."

"Of that I am quite sure," interrupted the lieutenant, spontaneously.

"And, perhaps," continued the admiral, simply, "in the hands of her children the sword of the *Constitution* may again be drawn in the service of our beloved country. But where is Barry? The sun is just setting. He should—— Ah, there he is.

Evening colors, Mr. Revere," said the veteran, rising to his feet as the gun on the terrace boomed out in salute, and standing still until the colors slowly and gracefully floated down.

One of the most beautiful of sights is the fall of a flag, when it comes down by your own hand and betokens no surrender. The declining banner lingers in the evening air with sweet reluctance until it finally drops into waiting hands with a touch like a caress.

"You see, we keep up the customs of the service as near as we can, sir. How is the ship, Barry?" the admiral asked, as the old sailor delivered his report, as he had done the evening before and on all the evenings of their long sojourn on Ship House Point.

"I have a fond fancy, Mr. Revere," resumed the veteran, after the termination of the customary conversation with the sailor, "that the ship and I will sail into the final harbor together. Both of us are old and worn out, laid up in ordinary, waiting for the end. But let us go into the house. The night air grows chill for me. Emily shall sing to us, and then I shall bid you good-night."

The girl's sweet, low voice, although unaccompanied, makes rare music in the old room. The admiral sits with his eyes closed, a smile upon his lips, beating the time upon the arm of his chair with his withered fingers. The songs the girl sings are of the music of the past; the words, those the admiral heard when he was a boy. Now it is a rollicking sea-chorus which bubbles from her young lips, now

it is a sweet old ballad that his wife sang in the long ago time. His head nods, and he says, softly, under his breath, half in time with the rhythm,—

"Ay, just so. When I was a boy, so many years ago!"

Revere listens entranced, though possibly he had arrived at such a state that he would have listened entranced if she had sung badly,—which she did not. Her voice, though untrained, was delightful. It had the naturalness of bird notes, the freshness of youth, and the purity that charms the world. The airs were half-forgotten things, lingering familiarly in his memory. He may have heard them when he was a baby in his mother's arms, and she from her mother, and so on down through the long line of ancient ancestry maternal.

The sweetest songs, are they not the oldest? Have not the peasants of Sicily been singing the music of "Home, Sweet Home," for a thousand years?

And so the young man listens and loves, the old man listens and dreams, and the girl sings as never before, for this time she knows that a young heart beats in harmony with her voice. Alas for the old! he has had his day. Compelling youth enters and displaces him. Emily sings not merely for the past, but with thoughts reaching out into the future. When she stops, fain to be persuaded, Revere entreats her to continue, he begs for more. She knows not how to refuse, indeed does not wish to do so, so she sings on and on.

The admiral sleeps, but what of that? Youth listens, and by and by, as she strikes something that

he knows, in a fresh, hearty tenor voice he ventures to join with her. In the harmony of their voices they almost see a prophecy of the future harmony of their lives.

Many a time has she sung to the admiral and the old sailor, but never quite as to-night. And Captain Barry has not been there. The heavy oaken chair, which he made himself from the timbers of the ship, which stands by the door, and which, in its rude strength, its severe plainness, somehow suggests the man, is empty. To the admiral she has sung like a voice from the past, to Barry her music has been like that of an angel in heaven, to Revere it is the voice of the woman he loves. But to-night, although he hears the music, Captain Barry will not come in. He stands on the porch, peering through the blinds. Unskilled as he is in the reading of character, unaccustomed to the observation of faces, there is no mistaking, even in the sailor's mind, the look in the eyes of Revere.

The young man sits opposite Emily, listening to her, watching her, drinking in the sweetness of the melody and the beauty of her face; the light that is in his eye is the light of a love that has come, not as the oak grows from the tiny seed, slowly developing through the ages, and spreading and bourgeoning until it fills the landscape, but the glory of a passion that has burst upon him with the suddenness of a tempest, and one that promises to be as irresistible in its onset. And Barry sees it all, divines, knows, feels, and in the light of another love recognizes at last his own futile pas-

sion. The revelation of hopelessness in the light of hope, of despair in the glow of success.

Never had the Bostonian been brought in contact with a personality quite like that of Emily. More beautiful girls, measured by the canons, he had seen, possibly; wiser in the world's ways, better trained, more accustomed to the usages of society, undoubtedly; but never one so sweet, so innocent, so fresh, so unspoiled, so lovely, and so lovable. As frank as she was beautiful, as brave as she was innocent, as pure as she was strong. There was no use denying it; he could not disguise it; he had loved her from the moment when, standing on the wreck, he saw her steering the skiff in the storm, with her fair hair blown out by the breeze and her face turned up toward him, full of encouragement and entreaty.

And Barry knew it now.

As a young sailor, Revere had flirted and frolicked with many girls, he had been staidly engaged to another for a long time, but not until that day had he really loved any one. As for the girl, she had taken him at his face value; and while it would hardly be just to say that she entirely reciprocated his feeling, yet it was easy to see whither her heart tended and what the end of the acquaintance would be unless something checked the course of the growing interest she felt in the young man.

Could Barry check it? He yearned to try. And all these things were plain to the old sailor. He suddenly found himself dowered with an unwonted ability to reason, to see, to read beneath the surface.

'Twas love's enlightening touch; hopeless, uncoveting, yet jealous love, that opened his eyes. Love blinds? Ay, but he enlightens, too.

Barry's glance through the window ranged from the dozing admiral to the adoring young man, and paused over the face, exalted, of the young woman. His breath came hard as he gazed, his heart rose in his throat and tried to suffocate him. He clinched his hands, closed his teeth—a dangerous man, there, under the moonlight. He cursed the gay young lieutenant under his breath, as Adam might have cursed the serpent who gave him, through the woman, of that tree of knowledge that opened his eyes and turned his paradise into a hell.

CHAPTER X

Facing World-Old Problems

WHEN the lights in the house were all out, and they had all gone to their rest or their restlessness, to their dreams or their oblivion, the sailor returned to his ship. Lighting his lantern, that hung in the sheltered corner aft where he slung his hammock, he pulled from the breast of his shirt a little bundle of water-stained papers. One was a long, official-looking envelope, bearing the stamp of the Navy Department, and evidently containing an order or an important communication. Barry had often seen such envelopes addressed to the admiral. The others, if he could judge from the outside, were private letters, and the envelopes bore, he thought, a woman's handwriting. He arrived at this last conclusion instinctively, for he was without familiarity with such things; he had scarcely ever received a letter in his fifty years of life.

He had found them that morning on the shore by the landing, where they had fallen from the pocket of Revere's coat the night before. Instead of handing them to the young man, he had retained them;

moved by what idea that they might be of value to him some day, who could say?

The envelopes had all been opened, and nothing prevented him from examining the contents. He was but a rude sailor; the niceties and refinements of other ranks of life were not for him, yet he hesitated to read the documents. Two or three times he half drew one of the letters from its envelope only to thrust it resolutely back. Miss Emily would not have read them, nor the admiral either; that he knew. Finally he gathered up the handful, put them in the locker near where he stood, and turned the key. He would not read them, but he would not return them, either.

Ah, Barry, 'tis not alone hesitant woman who loses!

He had won a partial advantage, the first skirmish in a battle which was to be renewed with increasing force with every passing hour. He would have given the world to have examined those documents and papers. They would tell him something of the errand of the man, perhaps; but he had not reached the breaking point,—not yet, although, under the influence of his furious jealousy and consequent animosity, he was not far from it. Unconsciously he contrasted Revere with himself, and suffered keenly in the ever-growing realization of his disadvantage. Old, common, rude, lonely, faithful, that was all,—and it was not enough.

As for Revere, the loss of the letters, which he had discovered when he put on his own uniform, annoyed him somewhat, although he did not consider it

serious. That afternoon he had written to the Navy Department detailing his accident and asking that new orders be made out for him. He had also written to his mother, lightly mentioning his adventure and his lost baggage, and directing that other clothing be sent him immediately by his man. In this letter he had enclosed a short note for Josephine. In neither of them did he dwell much upon Emily Sanford.

Of the trio in the house he was one to whom oblivion did not come readily that night. He was facing a very serious crisis in his life. He had been betrothed to Josephine Remington, a far-off connection of his mother, since his graduation, and the betrothal was only the carrying out of a plan which had long been agreed upon between the respective families. The engagement was a matter of general notoriety, and was an accepted fact among their many friends. In the absence of any other affection, he had never realized that he had not loved Josephine as he should, and never suspected, until he had felt the touch of genuine passion, and had become thereby an authority upon the subject, that she did not love him either.

But what was to be done was a grave question. Was it right for him to make love to Emily Sanford, which he had certainly done, by implication at least, and which he certainly wanted to do directly and unequivocally, under the circumstances? or, was it right to allow Emily Sanford to fall in love with him, which, without vanity, he felt she might do, and which he fervently hoped with all his soul she would do, while

he was engaged to Josephine? It certainly was not right. That was a conclusion about which there could be no other opinion.

He finally resolved that he would treat Emily Sanford with proper reserve, and circumspectly watch his conduct toward her for the present. Perhaps it would be best, after all, to try to put her out of his heart and keep to his engagement his mind suggested faintly. That was impossible he felt in his heart. It was Emily or nothing. No, he could not and he would not. He must at once secure a release from the one so that he could have the right to woo the other honorably and openly.

Yet, how to be free? Could he ask Josephine to release him? What would his mother think of such a demand, and how would his conduct in the affair be regarded by his friends? And yet he could not carry out his engagement. That was final. In one moment the delusion of years which he had accepted—nay, even encouraged—with a youth's indifference had been swept away. Love had smitten him; his eyes, too, had been opened. Whatever betided, there was but one woman in the world for him. Yet he must conceal his feeling and make no avowal until he was free. Poor Richard! He did not realize that the man does not live who can conceal from the woman he loves the fact that he loves her. It is in the very air, and nature has a thousand ways to tell the tale, with each one of which the most untutored woman suddenly grows familiar at the right moment.

They were puzzling and annoying questions, but,

with a conduct quite what would be expected from so gallant a sailor, he at last made up his mind. Of one thing he was certain,—that he loved Emily, and that she was the only woman in the world for him. And he would be free. So Revere, like Barry, hesitated and was lost!

Even the situation with regard to the old ship was a puzzling one. There would be no evading the orders of the government. The ship must be sold to the best advantage and broken up. Yet to destroy the ship was to write the admiral's death-warrant. He had to obey his orders. No sentimental considerations would be allowed to interfere with the command of the department. Still, how could he do it? He did not dare tell the news to the admiral, he could not mention it to Emily, he would not even like to declare it to the old sailor.

The more he considered the situation the more unfortunate the position in which he found himself. As a lover,—of Emily, that is,—he was pledged to another woman. As a guest of the admiral, he was there to take away the ship. And, although he entered little into his calculations, he might have added, had he known it, that on both counts, ship and maiden, he was about to break the heart of the man who had saved his life. And all of this had been brought about in the most innocent and unwitting way. He felt himself, in some strange manner, the sport of a hard and malignant fortune.

The night was still and calm to the admiral, sleeping dreamlessly without foreboding; but to his grand-

daughter—ah, she was the dreamer. This young hero, this demigod from over the sea, how he had looked at her, how he had listened to her, how his eyes had seemed to pierce the very depths of her maiden soul! He had not complimented her upon her singing; he had only asked for more and still more. And how beautifully his voice had blended with hers! Was he, indeed, the fairy prince come at last to awaken the sleeping beauty of her passion,—to kiss into life the too long dormant feeling in her heart?

There are songs without words in maidens' hearts, and one of them rippled through the innocence of her girlish soul in the still watches of that heavenly night.

And they all forgot old Barry alone on the ship.

CHAPTER XI

Blows at the Heart

REVERE spent the next morning in a thorough inspection of the ship. It was a duty enjoined upon him in the carrying out of his orders, and he had felt somewhat guilty in having neglected it the day before. His Naval Academy course had included instruction in wooden ship-building,—iron ships were only just beginning to be at that date,—and he therefore viewed the *Susquehanna* with the eyes of an expert. At his own request, he had been attended in this survey by the sailor Barry, although it is more than probable that, in any case, the old man would have insisted upon accompanying him.

With what jealous pain the veteran seaman dogged the footsteps of the young sailor and watched him examine his beloved ship! Nothing escaped Revere's rigid scrutiny. Barry himself, after his years of familiarity with the old hulk, could not have made a more exhaustive investigation. There was but one spot which Revere did not view. That was the private locker which the old seaman had made for himself in the one habitable portion of the ship.

"What's this?" Revere had asked, pausing before

the closed, locked door. "Your traps, eh? Well, I guess we have no need to inspect them," he continued, smiling, and passing on.

Yet, had he known it, behind that closed door lay his fate, for the lost letters and papers—which Barry had not yet read—were there.

The keen, critical examination of the old ship by the young lieutenant enhanced the growing animosity of the sailor. His cool comments seemed like a profanation. Barry felt as if his enemy were appraising the virtues of his wife; as if, examining her in her old age, he were disappointed and surprised at not finding in her the qualities and excellencies of her youth. Every prying finger touch, crumbling the rotting wood, was a desecration. Every blow struck upon the timbers to test their soundness was an added insult.

Had the young man been less intent upon that task he would have seen in the clouded brow, the closed lips, the stern expression upon his companion's face something of the older man's exacerbated feelings; but, engrossed by his inspection, he noticed nothing. Indeed, like many very young naval officers of the time, he thought but little of the sailor at best. He was a part—and a very essential part—of the vast naval machine, of course, but otherwise nothing. When Revere grew older he would learn to estimate the value of the man upon the yard-arm, the man behind the gun, and to rate him more highly; but at present his attitude was more or less one of indifference.

It was true that Barry, equally with Emily, had saved his life ; but by a perfectly natural trick of the mind—or heart, rather—all the heroism of that splendid achievement had focussed itself about the woman, and to Revere the man became an incident rather than a cause,—merely a detail. Just as the captain who leads the forlorn hope gets the mention in the despatches and enrolls his name upon the pages of history, to the exclusion of those other men, perhaps no less brave than he, who followed him, so Emily stood to the fore, and Barry's part was already half forgotten. This carelessly oblivious attitude of mind, which he divined even in the absence of any very specific outward evidence of it, added to the exasperation of the sailor, and he fairly hated the officer.

"There are certain categories of the mind which must be true, else would reason reel and totter on its throne." As an illustration, we cannot think of love without thinking of hate, and perhaps the capacity for one may be measured by the ability for the other. The man who loves high things, burns with corresponding hatred for the base,—or else something is lacking in his love ; and, as is the case with all other antitheses of sentiment, both feelings find lodgment in the normal mind.

Barry had loved through years. He had loved the admiral, he had loved the ship, and, above all, he had loved the girl. The peaceful, quiet, even tenor of his life had offered no lodgment for antagonisms. To love, to serve,—that had been his happy existence. Living alone on Ship House Point, attending to his

simple duties, wrapped up in his devotion, he had found neither cause nor reason for hatred, and when that awful passion found a lodgment in his bosom, it came so suddenly, so violently, that it destroyed the mental and spiritual balance of the man. The faculty of hating had years of disuse to make up for, and the feeling swept over him like a tidal wave, uncontrollable, appalling. The swiftness with which it developed had but added to his confusion. There is love at first sight, but there is antipathy as well. He was a living illustration of the latter fact.

So perverted had become the sailor's mind, under the influence of this rising feeling, that in his bewilderment he sometimes fancied that his antipathy was universal,—that he hated the admiral, the ship, Emily, himself! Yet this could not be; and in calmer moments, although without the power of analysis, he realized dumbly that these griping emotions were but the concomitants of his obsession.

Of all this the lieutenant was yet blithely unconscious. It is said that but a single object can engross the mind at one time, and that concepts of other objects, even if simultaneous therewith, are merely auxiliary thereto. Emily filled Revere's mental horizon to the exclusion of everything else. It was with difficulty he kept his mind away from her when, in pursuance of his duty, he inspected the ship. To Barry he paid but little attention, noticing him, if at all, in the most perfunctory way. Disassociated from Emily, the sailor counted for nothing.

To his relief and Barry's, presently the long task

was over. The duty discharged, the two men scrambled down the battens which Barry had nailed to the side of the hulk to enable him to pass to and from the deck, and stood on the grass in the shadow of the ship.

"Well," said Revere, "she has been a fine ship in her day, Barry."

"Ay, sir; none better."

"See how sharp she is in the lines of her bow; look at the graceful swell forward. See how she fines down in her run aft, yonder. She should have been a good goer. The ship was built for speed as well as strength; and probably she was laid out by the rule-of-thumb, too," he continued, reflectively. "We don't build better to-day, with all our boasted science. Yes, she was a fine ship. I should like to have commanded her; but she is worthless now."

"Worthless!" exploded the old sailor, darkly; "worthless!"

"Absolutely. There is hardly a sound plank in her. The iron bolts, even, are rusted. I wonder how she holds together. The habit of years, perhaps; nothing else, surely. She's a positive danger. Some day she'll fall to pieces, and, if I were you, I'd sleep elsewhere."

"My God, sir!" exclaimed the old man, wrathfully, his face changing; "you don't know what you're sayin'! You can't mean it! Me leave the ship! I've slept on her for twenty-five years. You're wrong, sir! She's good for many a year yet. Some of the planks is rottin', I grant you, but most of the

frames is good yet, an' she's sound at the heart. She'll weather many a storm, you'll see. Sound at the heart! Leave her! I'll leave her when she falls, and the admiral, too. He's an old man. My father sailed with him; he was a man when I was a boy; yet he's alive still, an' he'll live as long as she does, too."

"Nonsense, man!" said Revere; "you are dreaming! The ship ought to be broken up. She might be worth something as stove-wood of inferior quality," he continued, carelessly, and ruthlessly, too; "but I tell you she's a menace to every one who comes here."

"Broken up, sir!" gasped the man, forgetting duty, courtesy, everything, in his anger; "by heaven, I'd rather set fire to her with my own hands an' burn her down! Burn the life out of the admiral, an' out of me, too, than a timber on her should be touched! I tell you, I've lived on her. I know her. I love her! Don't dare to——"

"Look here, Barry," said the young man, quickly, but with great firmness, "you are rated a boatswain's mate in the United States navy, I believe, and as such I will have to caution you not to address me in this imperious way. There, man, hang it all, I oughtn't to have said that, perhaps," he continued, as he saw the man's face working with grief and rage. "You saved my life, you know, and the ship, I suppose, is dear to you, and I can well understand it. We'll say no more about it."

"I wish to God I hadn't," muttered the sailor, entirely unmollified.

"Well, now, that's rather ungracious of you; but, never mind, you did, and I can forgive an old salt a good deal; only there is one thing I must say: Miss Emily must not go aboard the ship any more. You can risk your life if you want to, but I won't have her risk hers; it's dangerous."

The old man noted the cool, proprietary note in the voice, and broke into fury; difference of rank and station quite obliterated from his perturbed mind.

"Mustn't, sir! Mustn't! I may be a bo's'n's mate, sir, an' you can command me, but you've got no call to say 'mustn't' to Miss Emily."

"Of course not; but I shall speak to the admiral. There, now, that will do. Keep cool. No harm's done. I have inspected the ship and shall report on her."

"What are you goin' to report, sir?"

"Well, by George! If you are not the most extraordinary blue-jacket I ever saw! What I report will be sent to the Secretary of the Navy. I do not publish it to the ship's crew. What's the matter with you, man? Pull yourself together. You seem to be in a dreadful state."

"What are you goin' to do with the ship?" insisted Barry, savagely.

"I'm not going to do anything with her. I have been sent here to report on her, and I shall report."

The situation had become tense. The young officer felt that he had humored the sailor long enough; indeed, that he had allowed him far more freedom in his address than he would had given any one else. Ignorant

of the mainspring of the man's apparent antipathy to him, possessing no clew to the cause of it, unable to divine Barry's mental condition, he had been greatly surprised by his insolent and insulting conduct. It seemed to the lieutenant that his forbearance had reached its limit, and that something would have to give way. In another second there would have been trouble.

The state of affairs was relieved by the cause of it, for Emily appeared on the brow of the hill at that moment and called to the sailor. The old man instantly turned on his heel and, without deigning to notice the young man, walked toward her. Revere followed him promptly, and both men arrived at the top of the hill before her at the same moment.

By a violent effort the sailor had smoothed some of the passion out of his face, though he still looked white and angry.

"What's the matter, Captain Barry?" she asked, noticing his altered visage.

The man stood silent before her, not trusting himself to speak, especially as it would have been difficult to assign a tangible cause for his feelings, real though they were.

"I think I can tell you, Miss Emily," said Revere, pleasantly. "I have been inspecting the ship, and the man has not liked my opinion of her, I fancy."

"Captain Barry is very fond of the old ship, Mr. Revere," said Emily, quietly, "and I doubt not that any inspection of her hurts him."

The sailor looked at the girl gratefully, as a dog

might have done. The young man's heart went out to her, too, for her kindly championship of the older man. He was glad, indeed, that she had found a way to dispel his anger, for the lieutenant was a kind-hearted young fellow, and would have all others about him happy, especially in this beginning of his romance.

"Well," he said, generously, "perhaps I did speak rather harshly of the ship. You see I hardly realized how you all love the old thing, and indeed 'tis a fine, melancholy old picture."

"It always reminds me of grandfather and Captain Barry—old on the one hand, strong on the other," responded Emily, divining the instinct of consideration in his heart that had prompted Revere's words, and smiling graciously at him.

It was reward enough for him, he thought, as he returned her approving glance with interest.

"You called me, Miss Emily," said the uncompromising Barry, speaking at last. "Do you want me?"

"Yes; I am going over to the village, and I wish you to row me across the harbor."

"By no means, Miss Emily," broke in Revere, promptly. "I claim that honor for myself."

"Do you think you are quite strong enough to do it?"

"Strong enough!" he exclaimed. "Certainly I am! I should like nothing better. Besides, I have business in the town myself: I expect answers to some letters and my man with a portmanteau and

some other clothes. I should be delighted to row you to the village or anywhere."

"Well," said Emily, hesitating, "Captain Barry always rows me and——"

"All the more reason for giving him a rest; he is old and will be glad of this relief. Let the duty be performed by younger hands. Come, then, if you will allow me."

Barry stood silent during this little colloquy. His face, when Emily glanced at it, was as impassive as if he had been a stone image. He was putting great constraint upon himself, determined not to betray his feeling. If she could choose Revere, the acquaintance of a moment, and disregard him, the servant of years, let her do so. He would see. Not by word or look would he try to influence her. If he had ever heard of the Spartan with the wolf at his vitals, he would have realized what the story meant then.

Now, Emily much preferred to have Revere row her; he was a much more congenial companion than the grim, silent sailor. There was a sympathy, already an affection, developing between them which made her greatly enjoy his society. She would not have hesitated a moment, therefore, but for a certain understanding of the feeling entertained for her by the sailor. Not a sufficient comprehension, however, to amount to an assurance, but a deep enough realization to give her pause. What woman is there without that much comprehension? But when she saw Barry standing before her, impassive, stern, apparently indifferent, her hesitation left her for the

moment, and, bidding the sailor inform her grandfather of her departure, she turned and descended the hill, followed by the lieutenant.

As the two walked away the tension on the man was released or broken. He stood trembling, looking after them. A flower which Emily had been wearing had fallen upon the walk. In other days he would have picked it up and carried it carefully to the ship as a priceless treasure. Now he ground it brutally under his heavy heel and stared at them, almost unconscious of his action, quivering with voiceless rage. Presently he went up to the old admiral, sitting dreaming on the porch, and, having mastered himself somewhat again, delivered his message.

Out in the harbor the little skiff, the same by means of which Revere's life had been saved, danced merrily along.

"I like to see the young people together, Barry," said the old man, gazing after them. "'Twas a fortunate gale that wrecked him at our door. We shall be going soon, you and I and the ship, and who will take care of Emily then? Perhaps——"

He spoke slowly and he did not finish the sentence, yet the concluding thought was perfectly plain to the sailor.

He raged over it as he returned to the ship.

For the preliminary stages in the making of love there is scarcely anything that is so delightful . . . as a boat just large enough for two

CHAPTER XII

Broken Resolutions

FOR the preliminary stages in the making of love there is scarcely anything that is so delightful and convenient as a small boat just large enough for two.

Emily sat aft in the seat of honor, holding the yoke-lines and steering the skiff. In front of, and facing, her was Revere, with the oars, which, impelled by his powerful arms, afforded the motive power that speeded the boat on her way. He had been well trained, of course, and he rowed with the skill of a practised oarsman, a long, steady man-o'-war stroke, quick on the recover, delicate in the feather, deep and strong in the pull, which sent the boat flying over the water.

It was a sunny, delightful morning. The breeze blew soft over the harbor, and the water, rippling, bubbling, and lipping around the prow, made music suited indeed to words of love and beating hearts. Yet what they said was commonplace enough, after all. They did not say anything, in fact, for a few moments after they had pushed off from the little wharf. Revere was quite content to drink in the exquisite beauty of the young girl reclining in the stern-sheets before him.

He marked the freshness and sweetness of her face, the graceful curves of her vigorous, yet lissome, young body, and her dainty feet—the admiral was too thorough an aristocrat not to see his granddaughter well booted—peeping out from beneath the hem of her cool, flowing muslin skirt before him. From under her quaint, old-fashioned bonnet—a species of poke in vogue a year or two before—her blue eyes fearlessly and happily returned the ardent and admiring glances of his own. Lest the silence should prove embarrassing to her, however, and noticing, at last, that she dropped her eyes before him, he said,—

"I'd give a penny for your thoughts, Miss Emily, if I thought the coin would prove the open sesame to your mind."

"I was only thinking how beautifully you row, and wondering——"

"Yes, wondering?"

"How soon you had recovered from your accident, and how much better and stronger you seem than when I had to help you up the hill yesterday morning."

He laughed at this clever thrust, rather shamefacedly, it must be admitted, and flushed at the same time, while he answered her.

"I am afraid you will think me a great hypocrite," he admitted, contritely, realizing that he could lose nothing by frankness; "certainly, I am feeling very delightful—I mean, well and comfortable, now."

"Yet you are rowing in the hot sun! Now, I do not see how you can be comfortable at all, and I do

not believe, since you feel so well now, that you needed any assistance whatever in getting up the hill. You deceived me. Neither my grandfather nor Captain Barry ever do that," she continued, gravely, at the same time looking reprovingly at him. She leaned back in the boat, as if the matter was decided. "I wanted to speak to you about it before, but there was always some one around."

"Miss Emily, let me explain," he exclaimed, filled with shame, surprised, yet pleased, to think she should take so trifling a matter so seriously. "You see," he added, half in jest and half in earnest, "after saving my life so gallantly the other night, I had rather a feeling of—er—dependence upon you, you know, the next morning, and it seemed natural and appropriate to ask you to help me up the hill. I could have gone up myself I—I suppose——"

"I am glad you are honest now, at any rate. I must say you seemed to acquire the feeling very lightly."

"Of honesty? Thank you!"

"I mean of dependence."

"I didn't. I never had it before. You see, it's dangerous to save a life. The one who is saved always feels that he belongs to the one who saves. Now, I——"

"How do you know so much about it?" she broke in, with instinctive promptness. She would like to have him complete his sentence, and yet, like all women, she tried to put it off; hence her interruption. "Did you ever save any one's life?"

"Yes, once," he replied, rather reluctantly, inwardly perturbed at the turn the conversation was taking.

"Oh, how was it?" she questioned, interestedly, dropping her tone of banter instantly. "Was it a fellow-officer?"

"No."

"A sailor, then?" anxiously.

"No; a young lady," desperately.

"Oh, a young lady!" she exclaimed in dismay, with a note of disappointment in her voice that she endeavored in vain to suppress, and which he was very glad indeed to recognize.

"Yes; one summer at Cape May. She got beyond her depth in the surf, and I swam out and brought her ashore without any great difficulty. Not a very romantic story, is it? Not half as much as — I mean, not at all——"

"Oh, I think it very romantic indeed," answered this child of nature, whose notions of romance and love and other things were drawn from the antique novels of her grandfather's library; "if I had saved any one's life I should——"

She stopped and blushed furiously as the natural answer to her impetuous remark sprang into her mind.

"I will finish for you," interrupted Revere, eagerly, his resolution of reticence recorded in his determination of the previous night growing decidedly faint in the face of the fascination she exercised over him. "I——"

He would have gone on, but something in her glance stopped him. With the quickness of love and

intense sympathy he divined that the hour was not yet. There was an unspoken appeal in her eyes, in her burning cheek, her trembling hand, her heaving breast, which he could not disregard. He had been on the brink of an avowal. Thank heaven, he had stopped in time! For her sake and for his own he would be on his guard. He would not transgress again. He vowed it in his soul.

"I am deeply grateful," he went on, after a pause which somehow, in spite of him, expressed all he wished her to understand, "both to you and the sailor, and I hope to evidence my devotion and gratitude in some tangible way. By the way, what a strange character he seems! He appears to have taken a dislike to me. He said this morning he wished he had not saved me."

"How dared he speak so?" cried the girl, sitting up in the boat, her face flushed this time with indignation. "Not save your life? Why—but there," she went on, swiftly recovering herself, "he is a strange creature, as you say, and moody at times. He lives alone on the ship, and sees no one but grandfather and me. He is devoted to me. He would do anything for me."

"Those queer things in your room,—the harpoon, the shark's tooth, the model of the ship?"

"He put them there. They are odd things for a girl's room, are they not? but when you realize that they express the affection of an honest, faithful heart, they become quite fitting for any woman. Yes, I am fond of him, and I love those things for his

sake. He is devoted to the admiral and to the ship, too."

Mr. Richard Revere was too profoundly conscious of the vast difference between Emily Sanford and any common sailor to feel the slightest jealousy at her ungrudging praise; indeed, he liked it.

"So I discovered," he assented, appreciatively. "Miss Emily, you go down to that ship sometimes; often, I suppose. Please do not go any more."

"Why not?" curiously.

"It is very insecure. I do not see how it can last much longer. Some day it will collapse into shapeless ruin; soon, I think. And if you were there—" He hesitated and looked at her. "Please do not go," he continued.

"But it will break Captain Barry's heart to have me refuse. I've always gone."

She spoke doubtfully, as if seeking a further reason.

"Better break his heart than throw away your life. Believe me, I have made a thorough inspection of the ship. It's unsafe. It's almost gone. I marvel that it stands now."

"Poor old ship!"

"Yes, 'tis sad indeed. But you won't go, will you?"

"Not—not—if you do not wish me,—I mean, not if it is unsafe," she answered, softly, looking down.

He had shot the boat in toward the shore of a little island in the harbor, and there, under the deep shadow of some overhanging trees, he stopped rowing, as he said, to rest a moment, just keeping the boat under control with the oars.

"Poor old ship!" continued the girl, mournfully, as she dabbled her sunburnt but shapely hand in the water; "when it goes, grandfather will go, Captain Barry will go, and I will be left—alone."

"No, no!" he exclaimed, softly, all his resolution gone in the face of the powerful yet innocent appeal. "Not alone, for I——"

"That girl?" she interrupted, meaningly.

"What girl?" impatiently.

"The one you saved. Is she beautiful?"

"Some people consider her so, I believe."

"What is she like?" breathlessly.

"She is tall and rather large. She has brown hair and brown eyes. She has been beautifully educated, and she is exquisitely bred."

"She sings, too, I suppose?"

"Yes; her voice has been very highly cultivated."

"And you have sung to her, with her?" sadly.

"Sometimes."

"That song we sang together last night?"

"Oh, no; she only sings classical music. I think she would disdain a simple ballad."

"Oh!" said the girl, with much disappointment, and humiliation as well; "I suppose they are simple, after all."

"I prefer them myself," answered Revere, tenderly.

The conversation was getting dangerous. She changed the subject at once.

"Have you made many cruises?"

"Only one. As soon as I was graduated I was

ordered to the *Hartford;* but I was abroad when a lad, before I entered the Naval Academy."

"I suppose you have seen a great many beautiful and high-bred ladies in Boston and elsewhere?"

"Yes, a great many, indeed."

"Are they all very beautiful and charming?"

"Some of them are," he answered.

"I suppose," she said at last, desperately, "there are none of them like me?"

"No!" he replied, decisively.

"Is it so?" sadly. "Am I so different?"

"As different as day from night," joyously.

"Oh," softly, and with deep disappointment; "I have never been anywhere but just here. I have never seen any great ladies at all. I have never met any gentlemen except grandfather and—you. I do not know anything about the world beyond the horizon; but I have tried to read and learn, and I have dreamed about it, too. But I suppose one has to go and see before one can know of the people you speak of. You must think me so——"

"Emily," he said, his voice quivering with his feelings, "I have known you but two days, but I think you are the loveliest, the sweetest——"

She waved her hand in deprecation; but he would not be stopped this time. Truly he had forgotten all but his love for her.

"You do not know what the others know; I love you for that," he went on, impetuously. "You do not do what others do; I love you for that. You are not what the others are; I love you for that. There, it is

out now. I did not mean to tell you just yet. I do not suppose that you can love me; at least, not yet. There is nothing in me that would win a woman's heart in two days, I know. But there is everything in you to win a man's heart in one glance; and I swear mine went out to you when I saw you holding the boat on the edge of the whirlpool, with your golden hair blown back in the wind and your blue eyes shining with encouragement and invitation."

It was heavenly to hear him, she thought. This was better than her dreams. She sat silent and still, her eyes persistently averted, quaffing deep draughts from a cup eternal, besides which even the nepenthe of the gods is evanescent.

"I won't ask you to answer me now; but will you not give me a trial?" he continued, hurriedly, fearing lest her silence might presage a refusal. "Let me have a chance to win your love, if I can. Let me see if I cannot make you love me. Won't you let me try? Emily, you are not even looking at me."

He was quite beside himself with anxiety now. She had been still so long. What could he do or say further? A small boat has its disadvantages for the ending of a love affair. In all his impatience he had to sit just where he was. He could come no nearer to her.

"If I could, Emily dear," he said, humbly beseeching her, "I would get down on my knees before you; but I can't in this little boat. Won't you please look at me? But perhaps you can more easily give me

some hope if you don't look at me. Don't look. I'm not a very attractive fellow, I know."

This was an adroit move on his part, and his self-depreciation won a reply instantly.

"I—I like you very much," she said at last and very frankly. "I think I liked you when Captain Barry carried you up the hill,—even before, when you stood on the wreck. I wanted to help him. I don't know whether I—love you, but—what you have said has not been displeasing to me—on the contrary"——

"And you will try, you will wait? May I——?"

He waited breathless for her answer.

"Yes," she said at last, "you may."

"Oh, Emily!" he cried; "you have made me the happiest fellow on earth; and if I succeed in winning your love——"

"Do not despair," she whispered, softly, flashing a glance at him, her lips smiling, her eyes ashine with tears. "I think it has come," laying her hand on her heart with a sweet, unconscious movement. "I have dreamed ever since I was a woman that the prince would come some day from over the sea."

She stopped again. He stared at her in adoring silence. Her lips trembled, while her heart almost ceased to beat with the joy of it all. And her eyes were looking far away—over the sea, perhaps.

"We must not stay here longer," she said at last; "they will wonder what has become of us."

"You are the captain," he answered, laughing buoyantly in his happiness; "give your crew the order."

"Get under way, then," she replied, meeting his mood.

The little love scene had put strength into his arms. It seemed as if the power of his passion, failing other vent, had worked itself into the oar-blades, for the boat skimmed over the water like a bird, and in a few moments he unshipped his oars at the boat-landing. Swinging the skiff about so that the stern would be nearest the landing-place for her convenience, he stepped ashore, fastened the painter, and gave her his hand. Her own small palm met his great one frankly, and the two hands clung together in a clasp,—on his part of joy unspeakable, on hers of happy foreshadowings of the future.

Neither said anything as he helped her gravely up the steps. To kiss her then, even had they been alone, would have seemed to him sacrilege; there was something so holy, so innocent, so pure about the young girl, he thought, that he would like to throw himself upon his knees before her and kiss the steps her feet had trodden, so rapturous was his mood. Yet again, when he broke the silence, his words were commonplace. The noblest word would be ordinary when matched against his feelings then!

"What a sleepy, dull, dead little town this seems!" he remarked, looking curiously about him; "if it were a little handsomer, and overgrown with flowers and vines, it might be the town of the Sleeping Beauty; but the Beauty——"

"Is wide awake," she interrupted, a charming color irradiating her cheek, which made him sorry he had

been so timid. "And awake without the prince's kiss, too!" she added, smiling archly, in that she was a very woman.

Perhaps, he thought, ruefully, she might not have resented that kiss, after all.

Well, the next time would see!

CHAPTER XIII

Love Holds the Yoke-Lines

AS he anticipated, Revere found his man with a well-filled portmanteau and several letters awaiting him at the little old-fashioned country inn of the village. The morning was far spent when Emily finished her simple purchases, and the two lovers lunched together in the quaint old parlor of the inn. The girl, in her innocence of the customs of the world, was quite oblivious to the conventional necessity for a chaperon; so, without the embarrassment of a third party, they greatly enjoyed the wholesome and substantial meal provided for them by the skilful hands of the innkeeper's wife with whom Emily was a great favorite. They lingered a long time at the table in the cool old-fashioned room, and it was somewhat late in the afternoon when they started back to the Point, to which Revere had previously directed his man to repair with his baggage, by the land road.

The constraint which had been put upon both of them by the necessities of the business which had called them to the village, and the presence of other people wherever they went, for the officious but well-

meaning landlady had frequently interrupted the privacy of the parlor even, had been the strongest force in developing the growing passions in their hearts.

Emily was a simple-minded maiden, with all the attributes of a very old-fashioned age. She had no mission to reform this world, which indeed she had found most sweet and fair, and sweeter and fairer that day than ever before; she stood for no so-called modern idea; she had no deep plan or mighty purpose for the amelioration of mankind,—or womankind either; she did not aim at the achievement of great results, the doing of mighty deeds. The complexities of her character did not manifest themselves in these ways.

Woman's sphere for her, if she thought of it specifically at all, was a very simple and a very old thing. To love and to be loved, to be first a faithful, happy wife, and second, please God, a wise, devoted mother, was the sum of her ambition.

There were no young men with whom she came in contact who could measure up to the standard of her social and intellectual requirements, and the chances that any would present themselves had been exceedingly small. So she had represented in her life a hope deferred, but without being heart-sick with the delay; she was of so sane, so healthy, and so happy a disposition that she had been saved all that. With the optimism of youth she had confidently expected that some day the prince would arrive, and when he came, together hand in hand they would go "over the hills

and far away, to that new land which is the old." And the portals of that undiscovered country were now opening before her delighted vision.

Barely out of her teens, she had not grown impatient in her dreaming,—life had been too sweet and pleasant for that,—but the thoughtful and somewhat lonely years had made her ready, and it was no wonder that at the touch she yielded. When Revere came to her out of the deep, cast up at her feet by the waves of the sea, as it were, he fitted into anticipation already old. He represented the realization of her maidenly desires and her womanly hopes. That she should fall in love with him was entirely natural and quite to be expected, especially since he was blessed with a personality at once strong, lovable, and charming.

The reserve and the calmness of Revere's long line of Boston ancestry had been tempered, modified, brightened, by his sailor life and by his intimate contact with great and heroic men in the war which was just over. Frank, genial, generous, and not without a certain high-bred distinction in his manner, and blessed with a sufficiency of manly good looks, he might well have hoped to win any woman's heart.

The day had been a happy one to Emily, then ; happier for her than for Revere, in fact, for that young man's conscience troubled him deeply, while there was no cloud on her sweet pleasure. If he had not been engaged to Josephine he would have revelled in his love for Emily ; but he was not free. He was now bound to two women at the same time, and not in

strictly honorable relationship to either. The false position was almost unbearable to a man of his fine sensitiveness, and that he had made it himself did not make it less easy to endure. He firmly resolved to extricate himself from his dilemma by informing Josephine at the first opportunity.

No other course was left to him. Since he had seen and known Emily he felt that it would be impossible for him to keep his previous engagement, and yet he realized that it would have been more honorable for him to have controlled himself as he had determined, better to have been less precipitate and to have waited until he had gained his release before he offered himself to Emily.

Carried away by his feelings, he had proposed to her in the boat, and he regretted, not the fact,—never that,—but that he had been so little master of himself, that he could not have delayed his wooing for a few days, until, being made free, he could definitely and properly and honorably ask her for her hand. He felt, for instance, that he could not speak to the old admiral upon the subject until he had secured his release. It would be impossible for him to approach that soul of ancient honor other than free.

Yet when he looked at the girl; when the clear, sweet notes of her fresh young voice thrilled in his ear; when walking by her side her dress brushed against him; when by chance or design he touched her, or her hand met his; when she looked at him out of those frank, honest blue eyes; when he saw the color come and go in her cheek, marked the

beating of her heart, caught the unconscious affection with which her eye dwelt upon him at times, when she thought herself unobserved, he vowed that he stood excused in his own heart for his precipitancy.

Every moment when she did not feel and know that he loved her he, in his turn, counted a moment lost. He could hardly wait to get back to the house, where he determined to write to Josephine instantly and apprise her of the situation. He felt, as a matter of course, that she was too proud a woman to hold him to an unwilling engagement for a single moment. Whether she loved him or not he could not say. He thought not, he hoped not. Their engagement had been a matter-of-fact affair, and the courtship had been rather a cool one. He was perfectly certain that she liked him, but that was very different. He had never once seen her breath come quicker when he approached her, the color flush or fade in her cheek as he spoke to her. But he could not be sure. The veneer of birth, custom, and environment had not been worn off of her as it had been stripped from him, and her outward action beneath all this coolness afforded no infallible guide to her feelings.

If she loved him, that would indeed complicate the matter, but there could be—there must be—no other issue than that the engagement should be broken. He would be very sorry for her in that case, but there would be nothing else to be done. He could not help it that he had fallen in love with some one else, and the

only honorable thing to do now was to tell the truth at once and break away. A man's reasoning, certainly!

As they approached the wharf where the boat was tied Emily noticed that Revere looked pale and tired. The violent current of his thoughts, the acuteness of the mental struggle in which he found himself involved, together with his low physical condition, had worn him out. Therefore the girl insisted upon rowing back herself.

Even in the dependence of the first love of a young maiden there is a feeling of protection, a foreshadowing of the instinct maternal, which is the foundation of most of the good things in this life, even of the habit and practice of religion. Emily, while she gloried in his virile manhood and dwelt happily upon his strength and vigor, already watched over Revere as she might have looked after a child. And she delighted in the opportunity of doing her lover further service. So Omphale might have considered Hercules.

"I want to show you how beautifully I can pull an oar," she artfully said, in answer to his expostulation, herself only half comprehending the deep springs of action that lay in her being; "and you look so tired. You know you are not yet strong. I ought not to have allowed you to come."

The sense of ownership implied in her last words was delightful to both of them.

"I am tired," he said, honestly, "but not too tired to row you back; and I wouldn't have missed this

little voyage for all the cruises of a lifetime. Please get into the boat and take the yoke-lines."

"No," said Emily; "you said I was captain, and I mean to exercise the privileges of my position. Take the yoke-lines yourself. I insist upon it."

"Oh, very well," assented the young sailor, smiling at her; "I have been under orders, it seems to me, ever since I was born. First mother, then Josephine, and now you."

He sat down in the stern-sheets with affected resignation and gathered up the yoke-lines.

Emily's face had changed somewhat at this last remark, but she said nothing as she cast off the painter, stepped to the thwart, shoved off the boat, broke out the oars, and pulled away. She rowed a pretty stroke, quite as deft as Revere's had been, though lacking somewhat in power. As they cleared the wharf and headed out into the bay toward the Point she looked up at him.

"You have always been under orders, you say?"

"Yes."

"First your mother?"

"Yes."

"And then,—who did you say?" with poorly simulated indifference.

"Josephine,—Miss Josephine Remington," carelessly.

"And who is she?"

"Oh, she's an old friend of the family, a connection in a far-off way. She has lived with us pretty much since she was a child."

"Are you fond of her?" coldly.

"Yes," with mischievous promptness.

"I suppose so," looking away.

"But not so fond of her as I am of you, Emily," tenderly.

"Is that really true?" eagerly.

"Upon my word and honor," with convincing assurance.

"And you don't love her?"

"Not a bit. I love only one person in the world, and that is you," passionately.

"Was she the girl you saved?" relieved, but still somewhat anxious.

"She was."

"Does she love you, I wonder?"

"I think not. She never gave me half as much evidence of caring for me as——"

He stopped suddenly.

"As what?" she asked in swift alarm.

"As—forgive me, Emily—as you have this afternoon."

She stopped pulling instantly, her oar-blades lifted from the water in mid-stroke, drops trickling from them.

"Have I been bold and forward?" she cried in dismay. "Oh, what must you think of me?"

"You have been perfect," he answered, fervently; "simply perfect. I wouldn't have you changed an iota in any way. Don't let's talk about other people now. I'd rather talk about you. Tell me something about yourself, about the life you have lived, what you

have done, what you have thought, what you have dreamed; tell me everything. I want to know it all."

"Yes, but are you sure you do not love her?"

"I never was so certain of anything in my life, except it be that I love you."

There was conviction in his voice which comforted her soul. Still, she sought enlightenment upon another point.

"Are you sure she doesn't love you?"

"I think it is very improbable."

"Well, I don't, then!" she exclaimed, vigorously resuming her stroke. "You saved her life, and I don't see how she could help it," she continued.

"I didn't save your life, though, Emily."

The boat was in the shadow of the island trees, where it had been when he had first spoken of love to her that morning. She let it drift; again the water made sweet music lipping along the side; they would associate it forever with these ineffable moments.

"No," she murmured, her honesty and innocence giving her courage to say that which another might have sought to conceal, "you didn't, but—I don't believe—I can—help it, either."

It was out now. His love had shown her her own. She was another woman; never again would she look at life with the eyes of the girl of yesterday. Ferdinand had come to Miranda; and Ariel had opened the eyes of the maiden to new things on the old island more wonderful than those revealed by Prospero's magic wand. And to Revere, too, the complexion of the world suddenly and swiftly altered.

"Oh, Emily, you don't mean it!" he cried in exultant surprise. He had not hoped so soon for this revelation of the woman's heart.

Her face was averted now, but she spoke distinctly enough for him to hear every whispered word.

"Yes, I think—I believe—I do. I have thought about it a great deal since you spoke."—Three hours ago! "And I believe I——"

She could not quite say it—yet.

"Emily, dearest, I am so happy it seems to me I can hardly breathe. I do not dare to look at you. I love you so! Come, let us hurry back to the shore."

"Mr. Revere—" she began, starting the boat again.

"That will not do at all," he interrupted, promptly and decisively; "you must call me something else —now that you—oh, do you?"

"Richard," she said, bravely.

"Those who love me call me 'Dick,'" pleadingly.

"I couldn't say that—not just yet—Dick!"

He laughed in sheer pleasure.

"I never knew what a pretty name I had before, Emily."

"I think it is lovely," she said, naïvely.

"Thank you. Do you like my other name, too?"

"Oh, ever so much."

"I am so glad, because it will be yours. Mrs. Richard Revere."

"Hush, how can you!" she cried, blushing furiously. "I want to ask one thing of you. Do not say

anything about—to-day. That is, to grandfather or Captain Barry,—not just yet."

"I'm not likely to say anything about it to Captain Barry now or at any other time," he laughed; "and as for the admiral, it will do no harm for us to wait a day or two, I fancy,—that is, if you wish it, princess."

Her desire suited his plans admirably, for the delay would give him time to write and get his freedom.

"I want to enjoy it first alone," she went on, dreamily. "I want to have the knowledge that you love me all to myself, just for a day. It's so sacred, and so solemn a thing to me, Richard; so beautiful, that I want to keep it just here in my heart alone, for a little while."

She laid her hand upon her heart with the sweetest gesture as she spoke.

"It shall be so," he answered, frankly, adoring her. "Whatever you wish shall always be, if I can bring it about."

Oh, the rash promises of lovers!

"And you will let me have my happiness to myself, then? You will not think me foolish?"

"Not all to yourself, for, though I do not speak, I must still share it, and I think you are perfect in everything."

"We are at the wharf," she murmured. "I must go up to the house alone. Do not come with me. I want to think it over."

"But, dearest, I shall see you to-night?" he pleaded.

"Yes; but please do not persuade me now."

Respecting her desire, he doffed his cap and stood

aside for her to pass, bowing low before her with all the chivalry of his race, all the ardor of his youth, all the devotion of his manhood in his look and attitude.

The sweetness of the present reality so far transcended her sometime imagination of it that the girl, on leaving him, walked away as if borne by seraph's wings through the air of heaven. Yet there was a note athwart her joy,—not exactly one of sadness or of heaviness, but a feeling, as it were, of maidenly awe before the bright vistas of happiness which had opened before her eyes, in her lover's presence, in his love. Unconsciously she put her hand to her face, as if the sight dazzled her.

A little distance away Revere, having fastened the boat, followed her up the hill. She did not look back, but she could hear his feet upon the steps. He was there, then. He was looking at her as he had looked at her in the boat. He loved her. What had she done to merit this?

She stopped on the porch by the chair where her grandfather sat gazing at the ship and dreaming as usual. She bent low and kissed him as she had never kissed him before. He awoke from his reverie with a start, half comprehending, and gazed from the girl entering the door to Revere coming up the walk.

"You have been a long time, lad," he said, as the latter stopped before him.

"Yes, sir. We took luncheon together at the old inn and rowed back slowly. Your granddaughter —I shall have something to say to you in a day or two, sir."

"I hope so," said the admiral, quietly. "I thought so. But don't wait too many days. Days are as moments to the young; to the aged they are as years."

That day Barry had not left the ship. With a long, old fashioned glass that was chief among his treasures, which had belonged to the admiral, he had followed the boat across the harbor. He had divined—by what cunning who can say?—what had been said in the pauses under the trees. He had waited and watched for them until the lovers came back. He knew it all. Twenty times during the period of their stay upon the shore he had gone down to the locker and taken out the letters.

And at last he had succumbed to the temptation. The devil had won him in the end. Hidden away in his corner of the old vessel, he opened the bundle of letters and orders. And as he painfully deciphered them, one by one, it all became clear to him. This cursed officer had come to sell the ship over their heads. He had stolen Emily's heart, and yet he was engaged to be married to another woman. The letters from Josephine Remington puzzled him; but as he slowly blundered through them, with their casual references to an engagement, with their quiet assumption that all was understood between the two, Barry became convinced that Revere was simply amusing himself with the admiral's granddaughter.

And was he to stand idle, indifferent, impotent, while these things were going on? Was the old ship to be sold and broken up? His ship! His love, too! Was that sweet flower of innocence to be rifled of the

chief treasure of her womanhood and he do nothing? Was she to be robbed of her happiness, too, while he was there? No, never!

His brain reeled under the pressure of his thoughts. What should he do? What could he do? In what way might he compass the destruction of this man? Save the ship and save the girl, too!

Ah! Like to one of old in his blindness, there flashed an idea into his mind, as he stood there with the crumpled letters in his clinched hand. At first it startled him. It was so bold; in a way it was so terrible. But he had brooded too long to look at that idea in more than one light. With the one thought of revenge upon the man who he imagined intended to sell the ship, and who would gain Emily Sanford, he brooded upon the notion until it took entire possession of him, and then, although it involved his own destruction, he grimly prepared to put it in practice.

CHAPTER XIV

In the Shadow of the Ship

THE rest of the afternoon passed swiftly enough for Revere, because he was busy. He wrote a long letter to Josephine Remington, telling her frankly the whole situation: how he had met this girl, how he had loved her, how he had struggled against the feeling that had sprung up in his heart, honorably intending to keep his engagement, but each moment convinced him of the depth and fervor of this sudden affection. How he had come to the conclusion that it was not fair to bind her to a man who, while he admired and respected her, while he should ever hold her in the highest regard, did not, and could not, love her.

He had written to her thus frankly that she might break the engagement. He could not, he said, flatter himself that she loved him, or that it meant much to her; yet if he grieved her, he humbly begged her pardon, and hoped that some day, when she truly loved some one, she would find excuse for him.

It was fearfully hard to write such a letter, and as he read it over it seemed almost brutal in its frankness. Yet he reasoned that it were better to write it

as he had than to attempt to conceal the facts; still, it was with many misgivings and thoroughly sick at heart at the unfortunate plight in which he had involved himself that he sealed it up.

The other letter was to the Secretary of the Navy. Revere reported faithfully the condition of the ship, estimated carefully what he thought she would be worth as firewood,—for the materials in her were fit for no other purpose,—and then frankly offered to buy her himself for twice the value he had put upon her. In a private letter, which he had enclosed in his official report, the secretary being an old friend of his family, he told why he wished to purchase the ship. He told him about the admiral, and the old sailor, and the admiral's granddaughter. He made him see very clearly that it would kill the old man to have the ship broken up, and, since he possessed ample means, he wished to have the privilege of purchasing it himself and saying nothing about it to the admiral, or to any one, —letting it stand where it was as long as it would. As a matter of fact, it would fall to pieces in a short time he was certain, and the admiral need never know anything about the transaction, provided the secretary were willing.

If there was any doubt as to the accuracy of his valuation of the ship, he suggested that another officer could be sent to appraise her, and he stood ready to pay twice the amount of the next appraisement for the privileges of ownership. In fact, the matter would best be done that way. It was a nice letter, and he felt sure his request would be granted.

Revere felt much better when he had completed these two letters. He felt that he could save the ship for the old admiral, and that he could save his honor as well by his tardy action. He gave the letters to his man, directing him to mail the one to the Secretary of the Navy, and get a horse and ride back to his mother's summer home at Alexandria Bay, deliver the other in person, and bring the answer to him immediately. He could not hear too quickly from Josephine.

The admiral retired early that evening,—was it from a consideration of past experience, thought Revere, —so the two lovers were left alone.

"Emily," said the young lieutenant, coming over toward her as the door closed behind the old veteran.

"No, no, not here, I beg of you!" said the girl, rising to her feet. "Come, let us go out into the moonlight. Down to the old ship. It should be a part—a witness—of our betrothal. I, too, have loved it. The earliest recollections of my childhood are about it. It has been a part of my life as well. Come, let us go."

She extended her hand to him as she spoke. He took it gravely, and the two stepped out of the house and stood upon the porch. The moonlight streamed across the old ship, standing lonely and still upon the Point beneath them. The cracks and crannies, the gaping seams of the broken, mouldering sides, the evidences of decay, were hidden in the shadows cast by the soft splendor.

They walked down to it and stopped in its shadow.

Black, solid, and terrible in the silver light it loomed above their heads. They stood almost beneath it, and it towered into the skies above them. A trick of the imagination would have dowered it with spars covered with clouds of snowy canvas, and launched it upon the sea of dreams.

The girl still held the hand of the young officer. He waited for her pleasure, something telling him he should not wait in vain.

"I brought you here, Richard," she said, at last, very gravely, "that the old ship might hear you say,"—the words came from her in a faint whisper,—"that the ship might hear you say—you—loved me. Here I have stood often, gazing out upon the water, dreaming and waiting. Waiting for you, Richard, dreaming of you. And here you come to me and here—I give myself to you."

She faced him as she spoke and took his other hand. He stared at her in the shadow of the ship. The little autumn breeze swept softly over their faces. Slowly he bent his head toward her. She awaited him, smiling faintly, her heart beating half fearfully. It was so new and sweet. Then his lips met her own; he kissed her, he swept her to his breast, he gathered her in his arms. Her head lay upon his shoulder, her face was upturned to his. Her eyes were light in the darkness to him. The perfume of her breath enveloped him. A faint, passionate sigh of joy and content ineffable escaped her. He drank in the white, exquisite perfection of feature so close to him; the purity of her soul spoke there equally with the pas-

sion of her heart. She was his, his own; she loved him, she gave herself to him! May God deal so with him as he dealt with her!

"I love you, I love you!" he murmured.

Pity 'tis that there is no new word for each new meeting and mating of human hearts in this old world.

Pity 'tis that the words we say so lightly, that we use so frequently of things of less, of little, moment, should be the only ones we have with which to voice the deepest feeling of our being. Yet when the hour strikes, to each heart they come with the freshness of a new revelation, with the assurance of an eternal truth undiscovered until that hour. Never again would Emily be so happy as in that supreme moment of avowal and confession.

"I love you, I love you!"

It was only a whisper. She would have felt the truth had he been voiceless.

"I love you, I love you!"

It was but a murmur that blended with the sigh of the wind, that harmonized with the sound made by the breeze as it swept through the cracks and crannies of the ship, yet another listened, another heard.

Profanation to the royal arcanum of their hearts!

One had marked them descending the hill, one had divined that they would stop by the ship, one had gone down into the grim, black depths of the monster and with his ear pressed against the riven side had heard, and in the hearing had understood what he could not see.

So despair, heart-break, envy, jealousy, raged a few feet from love and joy and peace ineffable.

So in life it happens. Was there not a serpent in the Garden of Eden?

As he heard the sound of lip on lip, the break of kisses, and the murmur of caressing words, the man listening could endure no more. He turned and stumbled blindly away. Had it been mid-day he could not have seen where he went.

The sound of his going startled Emily.

"What is that?" she cried; "something moving on the ship!"

They listened, but Barry had gone far enough away by that time for them not to hear him more.

"'Twas nothing, dearest," answered Revere, holding her tenderly to him; "a piece of timber, a loosened plank, a tottering frame. The newest and best of ships are full of strange sounds, much more these old ones."

"Bit by bit it wears away," said the girl, sadly.

"Ay, sweet, old things go, but new ones come," answered Revere. "Life ends, yes, but new life begins. It begins for us. Come. We have told the ship the story. Let us go back to the hill."

"Keep thou the secret, old ship," said Emily, fancifully, yet half in earnest; "tell it not while thou livest, and if thou must fall, let it perish with thee."

She bent and kissed the plank. Where she kissed it Barry had listened. The whisper of love and the oath of despair,—a few inches of sheathing alone divided them.

CHAPTER XV

Forgiveness the First Lesson

"THAT kiss, sweetest," said Revere, gravely, as they walked up the hill, "has made the ship immortal in my heart. It shall stand until it falls away. I was sent here by the government to sell the ship. It was to be destroyed."

"Oh, Richard!" she cried in sudden anxiety and alarm at his words.

"Nay, love; say nothing of it to any one. It shall not be."

"Who will prevent it?"

"I."

"You! But how?"

"I shall buy it myself and let it stand as long as it will."

"How good you are!" she exclaimed, greatly relieved. "But, Dick, are you rich enough to buy a whole ship yourself?"

"My darling," he answered, "since you kissed me I think I have the mines of Golconda at my command."

"Ah, but kisses won't buy ships," returned the wise maiden. "Seriously, Richard?"

"Seriously, dearest, I suppose I am rich enough to

buy anything I want; that is, anything in reason that is buyable. No fortune could put a price upon you, I am afraid."

"Nonsense, Dick!" said the girl. "Are you as rich as that?"

"I am of the opinion that I am," he said, somewhat reluctantly; he could not exactly comprehend why. "Does it disappoint you?"

"No, I believe not," she answered, doubtfully. "I never dreamed of such a thing, I'll admit. I always thought we would have a little cottage somewhere——"

"We?" joyfully.

"Of course. We. I was waiting for you, you know."

"Well, dearest, I hope you will become accustomed to something larger than a cottage. Money has some advantages, you know."

"I doubt not I shall if you will teach me. Oh, Dick, I am so happy! I feel so sorry for that other girl."

"What other girl?" he asked, faintly conscience-smitten.

"Josephine, you know. The girl you saved."

Her words struck him like a blow. They brought him to himself. He had to tell her the truth. They were by this time sitting side by side on the gun-carriage on the little platform overlooking the brow of the hill.

"Emily, dearest," said Revere, desperately. He hated to do it; he told himself that he was a fool to

say anything, yet her presence and her trust compelled him. "I have something to confess to you. I cannot allow a shadow of deceit to rest on our happiness this heavenly night, and even though it hurts you——"

"Tell me, Dick," she said, as he lingered, reluctant to speak, "whatever it may be. I think I have had happiness enough to last a lifetime as it is; and you love me, don't you? It is not that you do not?"

"Love you? I worship you!"

"Then nothing can matter much," she interrupted.

"But I must say it," he persevered; "I am—I was engaged to marry——"

"Josephine?" a note of terror in the exclamation.

"Yes," with great contrition.

There was a long silence. The girl shrank away from him. She hid her face in her hands, but she did not weep. That would come later. Was she not to be happy, after all?

He felt so guilty and conscience-stricken that he made no attempt to restrain her movement of avoidance, although he longed to take her in his arms again.

"Oh, Richard, how could you?" she said at last, the misery and reproach in her voice cutting him to the heart.

"I could not help it."

It was the old answer that seems so weak, so futile, so foolish, and yet the only answer that could be given; a vague reply, and yet she comprehended.

"I've been a mean coward," he exclaimed. "But at least I love you, and I could not help it."

"Yes, I believe that—that you love me, I mean, —but you could have helped it," she answered, faintly.

"Well, I ought to have helped it," he admitted, in honest misery; "but I love you, and before you it was hard to be silent."

"But you loved the other girl before?"

"No, never, I swear to you!"

"Look me in the face, Richard."

She turned him about in the moonlight and gazed at him keenly, passionately, hungrily almost. He met her glance undaunted. The incubus of the secret was lifted from him—he was another man, even though still bound.

"Emily, I swear to you that my heart has never beat quicker at the thought of her since I have known her. Believe that."

"Yes, I do believe," said the girl, trustingly, at last.

"It is true, and you may. It was an engagement entered into as a sort of family affair, and I never cared anything about it one way or the other. I thought it would be rather pleasant——"

"Is that all?"

"Yes, on my honor, until I met you; and then I knew it could never be."

"You said you *were* engaged to her, Richard. What do you mean by that?"

"As soon as I could after I had spoken to you this afternoon I wrote to her, telling her the truth about my love for you and giving her a chance to break the engagement."

"Where is the letter?"

"It is gone."

"Suppose she will not break it?"

"She will, of course."

"Dick, I know that she loves you. I know she won't give you up. Oh, my heart is breaking!"

"Nonsense; she doesn't love me at all!"

"No woman could help it who knew you as I do," decidedly.

"No one knows me as you do, dearest. To no one have I ever shown my heart, myself, as I have shown them to you. She must give me up; she shall! I tell you I will marry no woman but you, no matter what happens!"

"And I, Dick, will marry no one but you. But, oh, the pity of it! Why didn't I know you before?"

"But you believe me, don't you, that I love you, only you?"

"Yes, yes, I believe," mournfully.

"And you will trust me?"

"Yes, I suppose I will have to trust you," she answered.

"But you won't do that merely because you have to, will you?" pleaded the young man, coming nearer to her.

"No," she said at last, faintly. "I will trust you because I—I love you."

He suddenly swept her to his breast again and kissed her once more. But she did not return his kiss, and immediately thrust him away from her.

"Please do not do that again, Richard; at least not

yet," she murmured, as she resolutely disengaged herself from his embrace. "Poor girl! you don't love her. And now good-night. I must think—it's all so strange—I don't know. We will talk over what is best in the morning."

"But you love me still? You won't let this make any difference, will you?" he pleaded, in deadly anxiety, stretching out his hands to her.

"It won't make any difference in my love,—nothing will ever change that," she answered, sadly; "but it makes a great difference in my happiness."

Poor Emily! she was just learning that the beginning of a woman's love is forgiveness.

In the oldest of Books is written, "It is not good that man should be alone," and the saying is as true as it is ancient. The human being who looks at things through but one pair of eyes—his own—is apt to receive distorted impressions, to see strange visions, and to dream fearful dreams.

To be solitary is to go mad. Society is the preserver and promoter of intelligence and all the virtues; alas! of many of the vices as well. Men—ay, and women, too—have tried to dispense with humanity, seeking something higher. They have withdrawn themselves from the world a while, and, far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife, in the vast expanse of some limitless desert, or upon some rough-ribbed Sinai's rocky crest, in seclusion from the sound of tongues and the war of men, have sought to draw near to God.

And they have not found Him. Rather Satan has

entered into them and they have become victims of diabolic obsession. For God is in the people. The human touch conveys the divine. The attrition of men is the outward force that makes character. Life is to fit in and be a part of daily duty among common men. So other and higher life is won.

Barry was a man, alone,—a madman now. Revere had added the finishing touch by breaking in upon the man's solitude. The admiral was becoming only a daily duty to the sailor. Habit had almost encysted his affection for his superior. As Emily had approached womanhood she had drawn away from Barry. He worshipped her from a greater and greater distance, constantly increasing. And now that she loved one of her own age and her own class, the old man felt that she had almost vanished from his sight. The last link that held him in touch with humanity was breaking. Should he not strike while there was time? Love was not for him, but hate is everybody's. He should claim his portion.

The rotting ship was his mountain, his desert, his hermitage. Its bare, gaunt timbers were his horizon. He looked, he listened, he read again the letters, he agonized, he broke, and was lost. And when the devil came to him, under the guise of good to be accomplished, he found a place ready, swept and garnished for him.

Oh, poor, blind, possessed old sailor!

CHAPTER XVI

A Cloud on the Horizon

A QUICKENED conscience is not the best of soporifics, and Revere was a long time in getting to sleep. The miserable situation into which he had plunged himself, however, was alleviated by the consciousness, of which nothing could deprive him, that Emily loved him. And he persuaded himself that when a girl, such as he fancied her, loved, she loved forever. Which was true. There was much comfort for him in the idea. He could not, however, take the joy that should have been his in the realization of this glorious fact until his affairs with Josephine had been adjusted. As for Emily, she, too, mingled her grief at the pre-engagement with joy in Richard's love, but with less confidence in its permanence; and, like his, her hours were sorely troubled.

The next morning she carefully avoided seeing him except in the presence of others, and the topics they were both dying to discuss remained unbroached until a messenger from the village, a servant of the inn, delivered a note to Revere. The admiral and Emily were on the porch with him when the missive was

handed to him. Barry was busy at something down on the ship. He had reported to the admiral early in the morning that there were some repairs that he wished to make which would probably take him the whole of the day. However, nobody, unless it was the admiral, missed him, in which lay the pity of it all.

Revere started with surprise as he glanced at the address on the envelope.

"Why!" he exclaimed, involuntarily, "it is from my mother! Can it be possible that she is here?"

"A lady guv it to me to bring to you," said the messenger. "She come to the tavern late last night, an' said as how she didn't want to disturb you until mornin'."

"Your mother!" exclaimed Emily. "Why—what can she—how does it——"

As she spoke Richard tore open the letter and glanced at its contents.

"She has heard some garbled account of my adventure," he said to Emily, "and she was worried, and has come over here to see me. That's all."

"Did she come alone?"

"Er—no; not exactly."

"Who is with her?" with dawning suspicion.

"Miss Remington."

"Oh!" with great surprise.

"Well, I must go to her at once, I suppose," said Revere, doubtfully.

"Of course," coldly and disdainfully.

"My lad," said the admiral, "the inn is but a poor place for ladies of quality and gentlefolk to stay.

Present my compliments to your mother and her young friend, and beg them to honor me by accepting our hospitality while they abide in this latitude. Tell them, I beg of you, that my age and infirmities prevent me from extending the invitation in person, but that my granddaughter will call upon them later and invite them in my behalf."

"Oh, grandfather! I—I——"

"My mother will be delighted to receive Miss Emily," broke in Richard, quickly. "I have no doubt that her plans contemplate remaining here longer than a day, and I think she will be glad to accept your hospitality. She will be honored, I am sure. Meanwhile, I must go. May I have your boat, Miss Emily? I suppose that is the quickest way to the village?"

"Certainly, Mr. Revere."

"And will you not walk down to the landing with me?"

She hesitated, longing yet reluctant.

"Of course she will. Go with him, Emily," said the admiral, decisively.

"Richard," said the girl, as soon as they were out of earshot of the porch, "they have come about that letter."

"Yes," answered Revere, dejectedly, forgetting in his confusion that they had arrived the night before; "I suppose so. I didn't think it possible that it could have reached them by this time. My man must have made good time. Oh, dear; what shall I do? Was ever innocent man placed in so miserable a position?"

"Oh, Richard, you are involved innocently—you say you could not help loving me——"

"I couldn't."

"But you had no right to involve me, sir. But there, I won't reproach you. She won't give you up; you will have to keep your word, that's all."

She spoke with infinite sadness.

"You have loved me, anyway, and that's a great deal. I ought to be thankful for that, I suppose," she continued.

They were sheltered now from the observation of every one,—but Barry from the ship,—and she put her handkerchief up to her eyes and sobbed out the following in broken sentences:

"I've thought it out all night long, Richard. You saved that girl's life; she has a claim on you. I know she loves you deeply; and of course she won't give you up. I—I wouldn't myself," she wailed. "I hope you will be very hap—hap—happy with her and—you will forget all about this. Oh, Dick, Dick!"

"My heavens! Emily, you nearly drive me distracted! I tell you I couldn't be happy with an archangel if she were not you! She must give me up! She shall! I don't really suppose she will hesitate a moment. Why, if she could see you she would know in a glance that I could not help falling in love with you."

"Probably she thinks she's as nice as I am," she continued, through her tears. "She would look upon me as an ignorant little country girl. She would wonder how you could possibly fall in love with me.

I wonder about it myself. You do love me, don't you?" anxiously.

"Of course I do. I have told you a thousand times, and I mean it! I mean it more every time I tell you, and I want to tell you more every time I see you. I won't marry Josephine Remington, and that's all there is about it!"

"You must!" decisively.

"If you say that again, Emily, we will quarrel right here," sternly.

"Perhaps that would be best. If we quarrelled it would be easier to break it off."

"Well, we won't quarrel, then. But what I am going to do I cannot say. I'll just tell the truth and stick to it. I wish—oh, I wish—they hadn't come! I do not want to see her at all."

"But you must go, and go right away!"

"Oh, very well. The sooner it is over the better, perhaps. Good-by, Emily."

"Good-by, Richard," heartbrokenly.

"Won't you kiss me good-by? You have not kissed me since last night. You have not let me see you alone this long morning," reproachfully.

"No," answered Emily, with sad decision; "I do not believe I shall kiss you. We are not yet engaged, and you may not belong to me, after all. I think I would better not."

"Oh, all right, then," with a savage simulation of unconcern.

"You are not angry, are you?" timidly.

"No, I am not angry; but I am awfully——"

"You see I am afraid it's the end and another kiss would make it—harder."

She spoke slowly, with a note of interrogation in her voice. For answer he clasped her in his arms and kissed her fervently again and again. She remained weakly struggling for a moment, but finally returned his caresses. Presently, however,—after she had been well kissed, by the way,—her determination came back to her. She burst from his arms with a violent effort, exclaiming,—

"There, go! And I suppose you will be with them all day?"

"I will come back to you as soon as I can get away."

"Oh, Dick, I suppose I will have to go over there in the afternoon and invite them here. What will your mother think of me? I don't believe I ever met a high-born, high-bred lady in my life. I wouldn't know what to do."

"Do just as you always do; be yourself; and if my experience is any criterion, she will adore you as I do. Good-by."

CHAPTER XVII

Freed!

In the same little parlor of the inn in which he had lunched with Emily the day before, Revere awaited the entrance of his mother and Josephine. His mother entered first and immediately clasped him in fond embrace.

"Oh, Richard!" she exclaimed, tearfully; "I have been so miserable about you! You never said a word about the gravity of your accident, and I only learned about it accidentally. You are not suffering, are you? You have sustained no serious consequences?"

"No, mother dear; I'm all right. In fact, I feel better than I have felt for six months. It really did me good. It was awfully good of you to come to see about me, though. I should have written and told you all about it and assured you that nothing serious was the matter, but I thought it would alarm you if I did; if I dwelt upon it too fully, that is. I'm very glad to see you; but there was no real necessity for your coming."

"Richard," she answered, hesitatingly, with a long sigh of regret, "I did not come only on that account. To be perfectly frank with you, Josephine—you have not yet greeted her."

She stopped abruptly. He turned and faced Josephine, who had stood constrainedly in the door-way, apparently an unwilling witness of the meeting.

"Oh," he said to her; "how do you do, Josephine? I'm awfully glad to see you."

He had hitherto always signalized meetings of this kind by kissing her, generally upon the forehead or cheek. With a vivid recollection of his present situation, however, he hesitated awkwardly, and then concluded that it would be better to act as if nothing had happened. But to his great surprise the objection came from the young lady herself. As if she had divined something of his mental attitude, she drew back her head and thrust out her hand. He took it, feeling very much embarrassed, yet greatly relieved.

"What a greeting," said his mother, "between—but I forget. Josephine has something to say to you, Richard. She has made a decision which is a source of lasting grief to me, and will be to all who know you. I am sure it will be a great shock to you. Prepare yourself, my poor boy."

"Didn't you get my letter, Josephine?" said Richard, impetuously.

"No; I didn't receive any letter."

"Oh, then, you didn't——"

"Didn't what?"

"Well, er—nothing. What was it you wanted to say to me?"

"Richard," said the girl, "I may as well be frank with you. I—" She hesitated and turned her face away. "I want to break our engagement."

"Want to break our engagement!" he exclaimed, dazed at this development. "Why—I——"

"Yes," she said, honestly; "frankly, I do not believe that I care enough for you to marry you."

"But, Josephine——"

"Yes, yes; I know what you would say. I thought I loved you; but since I have come to know—Mr. Van Dorn, I am sure——"

"Josephine Remington, you don't mean to tell me that you have thrown me over for Charlie Van Dorn? Why, he——"

"Richard, don't say another word! I love Mr. Van Dorn, and he loves me, and I have promised to be his wife," with great dignity.

"Great heavens!" answered Richard, trying desperately to keep his happiness at this announcement out of his voice and out of his face; and yet he had to confess that he felt extremely annoyed at being rejected in this summary manner for a man who he conceived to be in every way inferior to himself.

He rejoiced, certainly; but the situation had elements of unpleasantness. For a moment or two these had predominated, but as he realized that he was free, he could hardly keep from shouting for joy. Indeed, he felt that his face would betray his secret, and he instinctively turned away from the two women, who were intently watching him, and covered it with his hand as he did so.

"Oh, Richard!" cried Josephine, contritely, "I'm so sorry; I didn't think you cared so much. I thought you felt as I do about the engagement,—only that it

was an agreed thing, and everybody more or less expected it,—not that we loved each other very much—I'm so sorry."

"My poor boy!" said his mother, coming up and laying her hand tenderly on his bowed head; "this is nearly as great a disappointment to me as it must be to you, although, of course, my grief cannot be like yours. Josephine, why didn't you wait a little longer? And in his weak state, too!"

"Never mind," said Revere, smiling—they thought him smiling bravely, by the way!—"I dare say I shall get over it; and if Josephine really loves Charlie Van Dorn, who is a splendid fellow, of course it is very much better that she should tell me frankly than feel that she must remain bound by an engagement in which her heart does not enter. Let us say no more about it. I will take my medicine like a man," he continued, mendaciously; "and I congratulate you, Josephine, on your pluck. I presume that I may kiss you now, just as I have done before," he said, touching his lips to her forehead as he spoke.

"Yes, Richard. But I am sure they were never very lover-like kisses at best."

"Not like Van Dorn's, eh!" said Richard, smiling.

"Richard, how can you jest about so serious a subject?" exclaimed his mother. "Poor boy!" she said aside to Josephine; "I fear his nerves are shattered."

"They are, mother, they are," exclaimed Richard, rapturously, giving her a bear-like hug; "but it's all right."

"Then, you don't care so very much, after all?" said Josephine, in her turn disappointed at the equanimity, not to say levity, with which her quondam lover received the news of her engagement to another man.

"Care? Of course I care! There, don't say anything more about it. Mother, did they tell you that my life was saved by a—er—a young woman?"

Ah, Richard, where was Barry then?

"A young woman!" exclaimed his mother, peering at him through her lorgnette in her very best Boston manner. "What sort of a person is she?"

"She is not a person at all, mother," he answered, hotly and inconsequentially; "she is a charming young girl, the granddaughter of one of the most distinguished officers in the United States navy. And she is as beautiful as she is brave and good."

"And who may this distinguished man be?" asked his mother, doubtfully.

"Admiral Charles Stewart, of the *Constitution*."

"Mercy!" she exclaimed. "Is he yet alive? I remember hearing of him when I was a little girl."

'He is very much alive and his granddaughter lives with him over yonder," he answered, pointing out of the window across the bay toward the old white house embowered in the trees on Ship House Point. "That is his home, and he bade me say to you that he would be honored to have you and Josephine accept his hospitality while you are here. He begs to be excused for his apparent discourtesy in not coming to invite you in person, but he is unable to leave the house, he is so old and feeble. His granddaughter,

however, will call this afternoon and extend the invitation, if it will be agreeable to you."

"I do not think we should stand on ceremony, Josephine, under the circumstances, and we will go ourselves and call upon the admiral immediately," said Mrs. Revere. "I should like to see this young lady and thank her for Richard. How shall we get there, Dick?"

"I will row you over if you will allow me. There is a road by land, but this is a quicker and pleasanter way."

"Excuse me, Richard; I think we would better go by land. I presume you can get some sort of a carriage. I confess I am not fond of boats at best, and since you were wrecked in the *Josephine* I have a horror of venturing on them."

"Very well, mother; I will make all the arrangements, and meanwhile go back to the admiral and tell him to expect you."

"Do so," said his mother; "we will go and make ready. Come, Josephine."

"Presently," answered Miss Remington; "I wish to speak to Dick a minute."

"Richard," said his whilom fiancée, when they were alone, "are you in love with that girl?"

"Well, er——"

"Answer me honestly!"

"I think it is very likely that I shall be, Josephine," he responded at last. "You see, since you have thrown me over I——"

"Dick Revere, I believe you are in love with her

now; I don't believe you care a single bit whether I throw you over or not."

"Care!" exclaimed Revere. "I care immensely, I want to assure you, Josephine. But I really do not see, since you have thrown me over, that you have any right to object to my falling in love with anybody else, have you?"

"Oh, very well," said Josephine, petulantly; "no doubt what you say is true; but one thing is certain: I am just as anxious to see that girl as your mother is."

"Just about as anxious, I suppose," laughed Revere, "as I should be to see Charlie Van Dorn if I hadn't seen him until I am sick of the sight of him!" he said, meanly. "Well, prepare yourself, Miss Josephine Remington; you will see something charming when you do see 'that girl'! Good-by!"

CHAPTER XVIII

"But yet a Woman"

REVERE had pulled in many an Academy boat race. He had stroked his cutter many a time when a cadet, but he never put so much vim and force into the oars as he did that morning. In an incredibly short time he was at the landing-place. Forgetful of his condition, he bounded up the hill as if he had been a boy. Emily and the admiral were still on the porch. Emily was looking very subdued and sad, and there was a world of entreaty in the agonized glance she cast upon him. His radiant face gave her delightful assurance, which his words turned into ecstasy. He chose a novel way of announcing his news to her.

"Admiral Stewart," he said, precipitately, as he stopped panting, "I have the honor to ask you for the hand of your granddaughter, Miss Emily. I love her and I—I have reason to believe that she——"

He hesitated and looked at the blushing girl, who had sprung to her feet at his first word, and now stood poised as if for flight.

It was all right, then; he was released, he was free! She knew that he would never have spoken to her

grandfather unless he could honorably do so. Her heart that had been so heavy was leaping in her bosom at the gladsome thought. Free to love her, free to take her for his own! The other girl had given him up, then. How could she do it? But she had! And he was hers now! She must go away, though, while the two men talked it over.

She turned swiftly toward the entrance to the house. The admiral, wide awake instantly, turned and caught her by the hand. Escape cut off, she dropped on her knees by the old man's side. What answer would her grandfather make? What would he say or do?

"Child," he said at last, fondly looking down at her, "is this true?"

"True that he loves me, grandfather? He—he says so, sir."

"Do you believe him, my dear?"

"I—yes, sir; I think I do."

"And I do, too, Emily. If ever I heard truth ring in a man's voice, I hear it now. But this is not all. Do you love him, daughter?"

"Yes, grandfather," she whispered, "I'm afraid—I do."

She hid her face in her hands on his knee, and the old man laid his hand softly on her head, murmuring words of prayer and blessing. As Revere watched them he thought they made a perfect pair.

"Are you able to support a wife, lad?" asked the veteran, at last, as he stroked the sunny hair of his granddaughter.

"Yes, sir; amply able."

"You have something more than a lieutenant's pay, then?"

"Yes, sir; I have a private fortune of my own."

"And your mother?"

"I have not told her yet, sir; but she is coming to call upon you immediately, and then I shall do so. I have no doubt what her answer will be; although, whatever it be, I am a man in years and my own master, and——"

"Nay, lad, a man's never wholly his own master in the presence of a good mother, and I'd have no child of mine coldly welcomed into any family. We shall see what your mother says. If she be content, I shall be very glad. You have no other tie?"

Emily lifted her head and looked at Revere as this question was put. There were tears in her eyes and her heart almost ceased beating. She was sure of the answer, yet she longed to hear his specific reply.

"No, sir," answered the young man, boldly.

"Oh, Richard!" exclaimed Emily; "and Josephine!"

"Josephine!" said the old man; "who is she?"

"A connection of my family, sir, who has just announced to me her engagement to an estimable young man of our acquaintance."

"Richard," said Emily, springing to her feet, "you don't mean it?"

"I do. Will you kiss me now, Emily?"

Forgetful of the old man, she sprang into his arms.

"Children, children!" said the admiral, smiling in-

dulgently; "you are in a great hurry, it seems to me. Ah, well, I remember when I was a lad, so many years ago, I was in a hurry, too. Now I wait. Indifferently I wait. It cannot be much longer, and yet, for your sake, dear child, I was loath to go. Now, please God,—and your mother, young sir,—the child will be cared for. We can go now, I and the ship. I trust I will be able to leave you in love's hands; in the hands of a gentleman and a sailor, an officer of the navy of the United States,—your mother consenting, my lad,—that is as I would have it. Revere, may God bless you as you deal tenderly and lovingly with this daughter of my old, old age."

"And may God judge me, sir, if I do not so," answered Richard, solemnly.

"This kiss is for you, grandfather," answered the happy Emily, turning to him.

CHAPTER XIX

The Usual Course

THEY were together on the gun-platform once more, Emily and Revere. She sat on the gun-carriage and he leaned against the parapet by her side. He held a fold of her dress in his hand.

"Now, Dick," she said, "tell me all about it. Was she vexed when she received your letter?"

"My darling, she has not seen it. She and mother started before my man got there. He is probably bringing it back here now. As good luck would have it, she has fallen in love with a certain Charles Van Dorn. He's rather a poor stick, too, I think."

"She must be a strange girl, Dick, to fall in love with anybody else when you were around."

"Well, I don't know. At any rate, she did fall in love, and she came here of her own motion to break the engagement."

"I wonder how she will feel when she gets the letter?"

"Well, dearest, I thought, under the circumstances, I wouldn't give it to her."

"Not give it to her?" cried the girl, with sudden promptness and decision; "indeed you will give her

that letter, sir! She shall know you loved me before she released you, and that you were going to break the engagement yourself. I won't have her think for a moment that I just got you because she threw you over. Not give her the letter, indeed!"

"Well, Emily," said Revere, deprecatingly, greatly surprised at this outburst; "you see I thought I would save her the—er—humiliation, you know, of being rejected by a man."

"And you will inflict on me, Richard Revere, the humiliation of letting her think that I only have you because she didn't want you! That I—" furiously.

"Now, my dear; you know perfectly well that's different. If she has half an eye, as soon as she sees us together, she will know that I love you desperately as I never loved her. She is a bright girl."

"Bright! I don't think so!" contemptuously. "She is very stupid to give you up; but I'm glad she is——"

"I should think she would be awfully sorry to know that a man had broken his engagement with her, and that's why I——"

"Mr. Revere, I believe you are sorry yourself, after all! I believe you are half in love with her still!" reproachfully.

"Now, Emily, you know that's nonsense. Why, I felt so joyful when she said she was in love with that Van Dorn, that I had to turn away my face for fear she would see how enraptured I was."

"Why didn't you tell her frankly, honestly, right then, that you were pleased with it; that you were engaged to me; that you had broken the engage-

ment before? It was your duty,—your duty to me. You failed me; you failed me before. I can't trust you." Most unkindly and unjustly spoken words were these, indeed.

"Why, Emily, my dear child——"

"I'm not a child, and don't you call me one! I am a woman, though you treat me like a child, and I'm not dear to you, either! You are sacrificing me to that other girl," bitterly, tearfully, but with great determination.

Revere was nonplussed by the revelation of these essentially feminine characteristics in Emily's otherwise charming personality. He did not know what to do or how to answer her in his bewilderment.

"Are you going to give her that letter or not?" she asked, insistently, after a pause which he appeared unable to break unaided.

"Well," he said at last, but very reluctantly, "I suppose if you insist upon it I must; but frankly, I think it would be better not to do so. I do not believe it is right."

"Is there something in it you don't want me to know?" suspiciously.

"Nothing; absolutely nothing. I told you all I said as near as I can remember. It's a matter of principle, Emily. I think you are wrong, dearest. I——"

"Oh, sir; then you will sacrifice me, will you, to your principle? Very well, Mr. Revere, understand one thing: if you do not give that letter to her as soon as you get it back, you do not get me. I will not have any one think I am a second choice."

"But, Emily——"

"Don't say anything more to me!" she flashed out. "I never was so angry in my life! Perhaps you are tired of me," impatiently and proudly.

"Perhaps you are tired of me," answered Richard, shortly, his own quick temper having at last reached the outbreaking point. "I think you are very cruel indeed, to want to hurt this poor girl's feelings, and I do not see why you are crying now, either," he added, as Emily, under the stimulus of this reproach, the force of which she recognized, put her handkerchief to her face and burst into tears. "It seems to me you have entirely the best of the game. My engagement is broken; I am free to love you, and I do, and to marry you, and I hope to. You have me," he went on with unconscious egotism; "that ought to content you. Josephine will know, as soon as she sees us together, that I love you," he continued, sharply, "and that's enough."

"I wonder what she would think of your love if she saw us together now," wailed Emily. "I don't care what you say; it's humiliating to me; it's brutal treatment. You say I have everything. You say I ought to be satisfied with you. I'm not! So, there!"

"Very well," said Revere, coldly; "I will leave you to think it over, and then, if you insist, I shall give her the letter, and you will be sorry for it as long as you live."

"I won't!" determinedly.

"I hope you will, anyway," with equal determination.

"I never dreamed you could be so rude and so unkind to me," she sobbed. "I am sorry that——"

"Perhaps you would like to break our engagement, Miss Sanford?" coldly.

"Oh, as you please, Mr. Revere," with well-simulated indifference.

"There is a carriage coming up the drive," he remarked, glad of a diversion when they had reached this uncomfortable point in the conversation. "My mother and Josephine are in it."

"Mercy!" exclaimed the girl, secretly glad of the interruption, too; "and they will see that I have been crying!"

"As to the engagement?" continued Richard, doggedly; but Emily started suddenly to her feet and ran up to the house, leaving his question unanswered. He followed her moodily and gloomily, feeling very low in spirits as well as very much annoyed.

Barry had been busy all day about the ship, but he had not been too much occupied to see Revere and Emily whenever they were within range, and he had kept close watch upon them. Too far away to determine what was going on by the gun, he could at least see that the girl was weeping, that she was unhappy, and he realized that she had left Revere in anger and disappointment. The young officer was beginning early to torment her, to break her heart,—so the old sailor surmised. If Barry needed any more inspiration, that was enough. But he was already sufficiently determined upon his plan, and he went back to his work with the fury of desperation renewed.

CHAPTER XX

Rivals Meeting

REVERE reached the house just as the carriage drew up before the door. He assisted his mother and Josephine to descend therefrom, and the two ladies walked up the steps to the porch and were formally presented to the old admiral.

In honor of the occasion, for, as he said, he did not often have the privilege of entertaining guests of such distinction, the veteran had dressed himself in the old uniform in which he had fought his battles. The lace was faded and tarnished, and the coat hung loosely enough about his thin and shrunken figure ; but the ancient uniform seemed to mark the age of the old man, typifying that past, forever gone, of which he had been so splendid a figure. The huge chapeau, the high stock, the ruffled shirt, the tight breeches, and the half-boots might have incited laughter in the irreverent ; but to Richard and his mother, and to Josephine as weli, they seemed entireiy appropriate.

And the admiral's manner—gracious, courteous—was quite in accord with his garments. It was distinctly old-fashioned in its gallantry and exquisite in its deference. Mrs. Revere, a grand dame herseif, was evi-

They were formally presented to the old admiral

dently charmed with him ; while on her own part she made a not less favorable impression upon the old gentleman, who, in his day, had always mingled with the best. It was long since the admiral had been in the society of such a woman, and he keenly delighted in the little conversation that ensued. Josephine, too, came in for a due share of attention, and, as any young girl would have done, she fell promptly in love with this charming old sailor.

The talk naturally enough turned upon Richard's adventure, and his mother could not say enough in her endeavor to express her gratitude and thankfulness for his rescue. The servant had announced that Miss Emily would be out presently, and the two women waited with unconcealed interest for her appearance.

Some natural anxiety filled the heart of Revere. He had no doubt as to the qualities of the woman he loved, but he wondered how she would strike his mother. She certainly was not like the young Boston women of his mother's social circle. Just as high bred as, and, in his mind, infinitely more beautiful than, Josephine Remington, yet she was of so entirely different a type that he could not restrain some misgivings. Of course he meant to marry Emily under any circumstances, and he had no fear, in spite of the quarrel which had temporarily overcast their happiness, but that she would marry him as well ; but he was the only son of his mother, and it would be pleasanter all around if she should be attracted to Emily and be willing to welcome her within the precincts of her exclusive family.

He could see that she was delighted with the admiral, as, indeed, who could fail to be? When the old man informed her that he had known her husband's father intimately, and that the old commodore had cruised with him when he was a lieutenant; and when he said pleasant things about the commodore, who was deservedly held in high esteem in the family, and told her some charming little anecdotes illustrating his courage and ability, her heart was quite won.

The moments passed in pleasant conversation, therefore, until the quick ear of Richard recognized a light footfall in the hall. The door opened and Emily stepped out on the porch. With the bright sunlight of the afternoon falling upon her as she stood, clad in a simple white dress, against the dark background of the closed room, seen through the door-way, she made so charming a picture of virginal loveliness that he could scarcely repress a cry of admiration and delight.

At the sound of the opening of the door, Mrs. Revere turned and critically surveyed the girl through her lorgnette, and criticism at once gave place to approbation. The admiral instantly rose, and as Emily diffidently stepped toward him,—poor girl, it was quite an ordeal to her, this meeting,—he took her by the hand and presented her in due and ancient form to his two guests, bowing low, with the grace of a finished gentleman in spite of his age, as he did so.

The dress the girl wore, while of the finest material, was decidedly old-fashioned in its cut,—a fact both women had been quick to notice; but when

she accompanied the admiral's bow by involuntarily dropping a sweeping courtesy, after a fashion much older than her dress, which went back almost to the days of her grandfather's uniform, in fact,—for he had taught her how to do it,—the effect was altogether charming. A little exclamation broke from the lips of the older woman. The lorgnette dropped from her hand, and, instead of shaking hands formally, as she had anticipated, Mrs. Revere rose and took the girl in her arms.

"My dear," she said, "how can I thank you for saving my boy's life? Why, I cannot believe that you did it! You do not look—you are so—forgive an old woman—so daintily beautiful, I don't understand where you got the strength to——"

"She did it, though, mother," interrupted Richard, joyfully, delighted at the turn of affairs.

"And she did it well," added the admiral, proudly; "no one could have done it better."

"It was nothing, madam," said Emily, blushing at these tributes; "I mean—Captain Barry did the most of it—did it all, in fact. I only steered the boat and held on to—Mr. Revere. Anybody could have done it."

"Nobody but you did, though," said Richard, promptly; "and if you had not been here, Miss Emily, I should have ended all my cruising then."

"I think it was a most splendid action, Miss Sanford," said Josephine, warmly, "and as an old friend of Richard I want to thank you, too."

"And this Captain Barry of whom you spoke,"

asked Mrs. Revere. "Where is he? I should like to thank him also. Who is he?"

"Just a common sailor, madam, a bo's'n's mate, long attached to my fortunes, and his father before him. Worthy men, both," answered the admiral. "He has been busy with the ship all day, but you will see him presently, doubtless. He has been trying to patch the old hulk up so that it may last a little longer. He watches over it as he watches over me—and my granddaughter. I sometimes think the ship and he and I will go together, and I have been greatly anxious as to what would become of this child then."

Mrs. Revere was not given to impulsive action. She was generally very self-contained, and usually carefully considered what she said before she spoke, but on this occasion she answered instantly,—

"Your granddaughter will never want a friend so long as I live, admiral, and I shall be happy, indeed, if I can repay some of the debt I owe her for Richard in that way."

"Mother," said Richard, "I have something to say to you. Admiral, you will pardon me if I ask Miss Emily to take Miss Josephine into the house for a few moments? No, sir; don't you go, please," he continued, as the admiral made a motion to rise; "I want you to hear, too."

"Certainly, certainly, my lad. Emily, show Miss Remington the treasures of your room, the model of the *Susquehanna*——"

"And the sword of the *Constitution*," interrupted Richard; "that is the rarest treasure of them all."

"Come, then, Miss Remington," said Emily, extending her hand to Josephine, "since we are dismissed."

Josephine instantly divined the meaning of Richard's request. She shot a glance at him of mingled amusement and annoyance, and found time to whisper as she passed him standing by the door, which he had opened for them,—

"You do love her, then? Traitor! Well, I do not wonder."

This was certainly magnanimous in her, yet she was not particularly happy over the situation. Not that she loved Revere, but a woman never forgives the defection of an old admirer. Although she may have been married for twenty years, when her sometime lover follows her example, she always feels that it is an evidence of masculine depravity and disloyalty.

However, Josephine could not justly reproach him in view of her declared affection for Charles Van Dorn. Yet he might have had the decency to wait a little longer, she thought, somewhat bitterly, as she left the porch. She was a generous girl, though, and had a good heart. When they were alone, she slipped her arm around Emily's waist, which was an unusual and remarkable familiarity under any circumstances on her part, and whispered in her ear,—

"Tell me, do you love him very much?"

"I—we quarrelled a few minutes ago about——"

"About me, I'll warrant," shrewdly.

"Yes," shamefacedly.

"You knew he was engaged to me, then?"

"Yes; he told me so."

"And you knew the engagement was broken this morning?"

"Yes, but——"

"Well, there is nothing to quarrel about. Tell me, now, honestly, do you love him very much?"

"More than anything under the sun," said Emily, burying her face on Josephine's shoulder; "don't you love him yourself?"

"I? Not a bit," laughed the older girl. "Oh, I mean, yes, of course, a great deal. I like and admire him immensely; but, you see, I happen to love—somebody else."

"I don't understand how you could love anybody else after having been engaged to Richard. Are you sure you don't?" ingenuously.

"Perfectly sure," complacently.

"And you are not giving him up for my sake?"

"Child, I had never a thought of you when I gave him up. I did it because I loved somebody else, and that's all. I would never have done for Dick, anyway; but you, I think, will suit him exactly. I hope you will be very happy, I'm sure."

"Do you think his mother—?" anxiously.

"I'm sure of that, too," answered Josephine, reassuringly. "We are going to be great friends, I know."

"I never had a friend,—a girl friend, that is,"—returned Emily; "I have missed one so much. You can't confide everything to your grandfather and a sailor-man like Captain Barry, you know."

"I should think not," laughed Josephine. "And I shall be so glad to be friends with you."

"And are you sure you do not love Dick?" doubtfully.

"I am quite sure of it," decidedly.

"It is so very hard for me to believe that, you know; I do not see how you could help it," innocently.

"Wait until you see Charlie—Mr. Van Dorn, I mean."

"I am sure that would make no difference," returned Emily, confidently.

CHAPTER XXI

A Happy Consummation

"MOTHER," said Richard, as the three were left alone, "I will be entirely brief and frank with you. I love Emily Sanford. It is a sudden feeling, I grant you, but I am sure none the less deep and abiding for that. I have reason to think that she loves me as well. This morning, after I came back from the inn, freed from the engagement by Josephine's own act, I asked the admiral if he would give her to me."

"I said, madam," interrupted the admiral, with natural pride, "that I would not withhold my consent provided the match were agreeable to yourself. I have reared and educated my granddaughter principally myself, and, naturally, she lacks many things which, I trust, she may easily acquire upon the good foundation I have endeavored to give her; but she has lived in an atmosphere of love and devotion in this house, and I would not have her an unwelcome intruder in any family. As to her family, madam, it is my own, and I think," he added with simple dignity, "that there is none better in the Republic. She will not come to your son portionless—

there is a tidy little fortune for her after I am gone, and that will be soon, certainly. Of her personal qualities I may not speak. She is most dear to me. For the last twenty years of my life she has been everything to me. No one could have a more dutiful child, nor one sweeter and more tender. She has been the sunshine and joy of my old age. I can scarcely bear to think for a moment that she should leave me, but it is a matter of a short time only. The old ship and I are ready to go, and yet I would fain see her provided for before."

"Admiral Stewart," said Mrs. Revere, gravely, "you touch me profoundly. I divined that things might be as you say when I saw your granddaughter. The marriage of a son is always a grief to a mother," she continued, somewhat sadly. "She feels that, in a certain sense, she will be supplanted in her boy's heart, and I have long accustomed myself to think of another wife for Richard; but of her own will she has given him his freedom. I thought it would be a grief to my son, but I find that it is a joy. Is it not so, Richard?"

"Yes, mother, the greatest joy, almost, that ever came to me, except loving Emily."

"Very well. Admiral Stewart, I never had a little girl. God has given me but this, my son. I will receive Emily gladly. She shall be to me a daughter, indeed, and I will endeavor to be to her a mother."

"Emily! Josephine!" called Richard, instantly, stepping into the hall. "Come here!"

The deep satisfaction in his heart spoke in the

tones of his voice. Emily and Josephine comprehended it well. As the two girls came on the porch, Mrs. Revere again took the younger in her arms.

"My dear child," she said, with kindly affection, "I learn that you are going to be my daughter. I am very glad. In fact," she added, drawing back her head and looking at the girl approvingly, "the more I see of you, I believe the more pleased I shall be."

"I congratulate you, Richard," said Josephine, "and I do it honestly, too. Emily and I are destined to be great friends, I am sure."

"Oh, Mrs. Revere," said Emily, her eyes filled with tears, she could not tell exactly why, "you have made me so happy! I know I have many things to learn, but with you to teach me and Mr. Revere to help me——"

"And me, too," interrupted Josephine; "don't forget me!"

"Yes, and you, I am sure I shall learn, and I shall try very hard to be what you want me to be and what I ought to be."

"Be your own sweet self, dear," said the older lady, patting her approvingly, "and you will do."

"Emily, bring me the sword of the *Constitution*," said the admiral. "Richard, lad, I give it to you," he added, as it was handed to him by the girl. "May you wear it always in defence of our beloved country, holding it ever at her service, defending the honor of her flag. After Emily it is my chiefest treasure, young sir. It has gone with me on many a cruise. I have worn it, not without some honor, too, in battles

and on dangerous service. I give it gladly into your hands, as I give you Emily. I know you will wear the one honorably and treat the other lovingly. When you look upon it, when your children gather about your knee and marvel at its quaintness, mark the rudeness of the hilt in contrast to its jewelled scabbard and brilliant blade, tell them of me, who shall never see them. Tell them the story of '*Old Ironsides*' and the last of the fighting captains of the *Constitution*."

"Sir," said Revere, as the old man solemnly pressed his lips to the iron guard and extended the sword to him, "I take it as a knight of old received the accolade; and, as the men of the past did, I swear upon the hilt of the sword that I will be everything a man ought to be to a woman, to your granddaughter,— and more."

At this moment Revere's man rode up to the porch, dismounted, touched his hat, and held out a letter, reporting,—

"I did not find them, sir."

"They are here, Baker. I'll take the letter. Say nothing about it to any one, and then go back to the inn and arrange to bring the trunks of the two ladies over here."

Revere had descended to the foot of the steps to meet the man, and he had spoken softly when referring to the letter, so that all the party on the porch heard of the colloquy was the direction about the baggage. Nor had any of them, except Emily, seen the man hand him the letter. With it in his hand,

Revere walked up the steps and handed it to his betrothed without a word. A glance told her that it was addressed to Josephine Remington, and Emily understood instantly that it was the famous letter about which they had quarrelled.

What should she do was in her mind; what would she do in his. Her temptation was strong. It would have been a triumph to have handed the letter over to Josephine at once. She hesitated for a few seconds, and, choosing the greater triumph, thrust it quietly into the bosom of her dress. She had decided not to give it to Josephine, after all, so Revere read her smiling gesture, and in the same mute, eloquent way he thanked her for her forbearance.

"Who is this coming up the path?" said Josephine, tactfully, breaking the pause which threatened to become an awkward one, and pointing to the brow of the hill.

"It is Captain Barry," answered Emily, glad of the interruption.

"The old sailor of whom I spoke to you, madam," said the admiral, turning to Mrs. Revere.

"The man who rowed the boat the night Emily pulled me out of the water, mother," Revere explained.

"My man," said Mrs. Revere, graciously, as Barry stopped at the foot of the steps and saluted, "I have to thank you for a great deal, I understand. It was your strength and determination, coupled with this young lady's skill, that saved the life of my son. I owe you much, sir."

"You owe me nothing, ma'am," said Barry, ungraciously. "I only obeyed Miss Emily's orders. What she says, I do. I always do."

"Nevertheless, you did it," continued Mrs. Revere, struck by his harsh words and repellent manner, but trying to suppress her astonishment and be kind to this strange old man, "and I feel deeply grateful. Is there any way in which I can show it?"

"No way, ma'am," burst out the sailor, almost rudely.

He hated the whole brood,—mother, son, friend, all of them, it seemed.

"What's the matter with you, Captain Barry?" gently asked Emily, who had been scrutinizing the man's pale, haggard face, his bloodshot eyes, his utterly despairing, broken, yet firmly resolute look. She, too, had been surprised and deeply pained by his words and actions.

"Nothin', Miss Emily," he answered, turning toward her, his face working with emotion he vainly strove to control; "nothin'. I—Miss Emily—the ship——"

"What of the ship?" cried the admiral, suddenly.

"It's almost gone, your honor. I came to ask the leftenant to go down with me an' take another look at it."

"Certainly, Barry," cried Richard, springing to his feet, eager to do anything for the old man, and anxious to terminate a scene painful to all of them, although he could not tell why. "I shall be back in a few moments, Emily, mother. Good-by. Come along, man," he said, striding lightly down the path.

But Barry lingered in apparent reluctance at the foot of the steps. He seemed wistful to say something, but words failed him. He turned to go, stopped, faced about again.

"The ship," he said, hoarsely; "I'm afraid it's gone. Good-by, your honor. Good-by, Miss Emily," he added, hoarsely, and then he turned again with a gesture and a movement which gave to all who were so intently watching him the impression that he was somehow breaking away from his moorings, and walked rapidly down the hill.

"The ship! the ship!" murmured the admiral, oblivious of all the rest, leaning forward in his chair over the rail of the porch and gazing at the vessel.

His hand grasped the hilt of the sword of the *Constitution*, which Richard had handed back to him as he left. Emily stepped over to his side and stood there with her arm around his neck. They waited in silence a little, a foreboding of disaster stealing over them.

"I wonder," she said, presently, in tones of great anxiety, "what the matter can be? I am afraid it is something serious. I never knew Captain Barry so agitated."

"It's the end, daughter, the end. I feel it here," murmured the old man, staring before him.

"Grandfather, if you don't mind, I think I will go down to the ship," said Emily; "I'm so anxious."

"Don't go too near it, child," said the old man; "one life is enough for the ship."

"Shall I go with you?" asked Josephine, noticing

how pale and worried Emily looked, and feeling somewhat alarmed herself.

"Go, both of you, and I will stay with the admiral. Look to Richard," said Mrs. Revere, apprehensively, sure now that something was seriously wrong.

Poor Emily was in two minds about the matter. She wished to remain with the old man, and yet, when she thought of Revere on that ship with Captain Barry, and how strangely, how madly, almost insanely, the sailor had looked, her heart smote her with undefined terror of she knew not what.

She must go! It might be too late already!

The two girls ran swiftly toward the ship in vague but rapidly increasing fear.

CHAPTER XXII

"Samson Agonistes"

As Revere and Barry walked down the hill the soul of the younger man was filled with light-hearted joy. He talked gayly to the old sailor, who had speedily joined him ; and although the monologue—since Barry had said nothing—could not have been called a conversation, Richard did not heed his silence.

It was but a short distance from the house to the ship, but in the brief time required for the passage Barry lived over his life, or that part of it at least which was of moment. As life is compassed in instants to the drowning, so in these seconds through his mental vision swept the past. He saw again the admiral as he had seen him in the prime of manhood ; he recalled once more the blue-eyed, sunny little baby he had held so tenderly in his unfamiliar arms ; who, in the society of the two men, had grown to be a woman whom he loved. The days and years of happy companionship, of humble and faithful service on the one hand, of kind and generous recognition on the other, passed before him with incredible swiftness.

The thought moved him to a sudden tenderness. As his eyes fell upon the gay, debonair figure walking so carelessly by his side, he hesitated. For a moment his determination wavered. Revere did not look or act like a scoundrel, perhaps; but with equal swiftness came the terrible evidence of those papers, those damning papers in the locker! The ship, the maiden! The one was to be sold, the other betrayed. Under God, that should never be! And he had kissed her. He was bound to another. And she loved him and had wept before him. This trifler was breaking her heart.

Every laugh that rang in his ears in his changed mood added intensity to his malign purpose. He was no murderer, though. He believed himself a chosen instrument in God's hand to effect a mighty purpose,—salvation to those he loved.

Alas! humanity is never so hopelessly blind as when it does wrong, believing that God sanctions it for some longed-for end.

The two men stopped as they reached the ship.

"It's just here, sir," said the old sailor, hoarsely. "I've been examinin' her all mornin'. The supports is rottin' away. I think a touch'll send her down. Would you mind goin' in there an' takin' a look?"

He pointed toward a place on the keel enclosed between two rows of weather-worn timbers, which supported, or helped to support, the body of the ship. It was the place where, the night before, he and Emily had pledged their hearts to each other and solemnly plighted their troth. Revere recognized

the spot, of course, with a thrill of recollection; but of course he made no mention of the fact. Barry knew it, however, and for that reason he had chosen it. The choice was part of his revenge. Where Revere had loved—or trifled—there he should die!

"Looks bad, doesn't it?" Revere said, walking into the *cul-de-sac* so carefully prepared for him, and stooping down and laying his finger on the moulder-ing keel.

Barry promptly followed him and stood between the outermost stanchions, barring the exit. The uncon-scious Revere was completely enclosed. The keel on the rotting ways was in front of him, on either side the close rows of supports, overhead the mighty floor of the ship, back of him the huge form of Captain Barry. He suspected nothing, however,—how should he?—until he turned to go back after his brief exam-ination, when he was greatly surprised to find the way blocked.

His situation beneath the ship was such that he could not even stand upright, but was forced to re-main in a crouching position of great disadvantage before the sailor. The old man stood with his arms extended from stanchion to stanchion, a perfect tower of strength and determination. It was useless for Revere, even if he had realized at that moment what was about to happen, to attempt to move him by force. In his weakened state he could do nothing. Even at his best he was no match for the huge old giant barring his way.

The old man's face was engorged with blood, his

jaw was set rigidly, and a little fleck of foam hung upon his nether lip. There was such a glare of demoniac rage in his eyes, such an expression of mortal bitterness and malevolent antipathy in his grim and forbidding countenance, that the heart of the young man, though he was as brave a sailor as ever trod a deck, sank within him. He was fairly appalled by this display of sinister and unsuspected passion.

"My God, man!" cried Revere. "What's the matter? Stand aside!"

"No, sir, you can't pass me. I'll never stand aside. Say a prayer, for, as there's a ship above you an' a God that favors no traitors, your hour is come."

His usually rough voice, harsher than ever on account of his emotion, was shaking with passion.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean to kill you where you stand, where you kissed her last night, you traitor, you dog, you that disgraces your uniform, you that sells my ship, mine! You that robs the old admiral of life, that betrays Miss Emily, that breaks her heart! You thought to play with that child. But I know you! I found your orders. I read 'em, curse you! To sell the ship,—God! my ship, that I've lived on, that I've loved, for twenty-five years! I read your letters writ by that woman you're goin' to marry! I saw you kiss Miss Emily, I saw her go from you cryin'! Tears for you, damn you! You've got to die, an' I'll die with you! You'll have the company of a better man to hell, where you belong!"

The old man's voice rose almost to a scream as he

recounted the ideas which had goaded him to this madness. The torrential sentences of the grim indictment fairly burst from his lips with ever-increasing force and fury. Revere heard him in a daze of surprise, at first scarcely comprehending the man's meaning; yet, after all, his words explained many things. As soon as the lieutenant found voice he protested.

"Barry, I swear to you——"

"Silence! It's too late to swear!"

Revere was brave; he fain would not die without a struggle for his life. Indeed, he had not divined the manner of his death; but before he could spring forward, Barry, as if he understood what he was about to do, said, ruthlessly,—

"Stand where you are! If you move, I'll kick you to death like a dog!"

He could easily have done it, as the advantage of position was with him. Rather anything than that, thought Revere, shuddering at the brutality of it. A prisoner, he could do nothing. The man was mad. If he chose to carry out his purpose, whatever it might be, the young man was helpless.

"Very well, Barry," he said, instantly accepting the situation, and summoning all his resolution to meet the inevitable, though his cheeks and lips were white, "you saved my life once, you may take it back now. I wish I could die standing, but if I cannot, why kneeling is as good a way as any for a man to meet his Maker. You tell me to say a prayer. Here it is. May God have mercy on your

soul and on my soul, and may He keep the child. That's all."

Not moving from his position, the old man began kicking at the stanchions. The one on the right was defective, and gave way and fell at the first blow. A shiver seemed to run through the ship; Richard, for the first time, divined what was about to happen. He looked forward and aft. The effective supports were all gone; some rotten ones remained, outwardly intact, but bound to go under almost any pressure; the few sound ones left had been carefully sawed almost through. Why had he not noticed it? The whole ship, therefore, practically rested on a single stout stanchion toward which Barry had already turned. It was a splendid piece of timber, and Barry had put it in himself a year before. When that came down, the ship would crash into ruins and bury them beneath it.

As the prop upon the right had fallen, the hope leaped into his mind that he might get away through the gap; but Barry reached down and grasped him by the collar with one hand the instant the way was open, and held him firmly while he turned his attention to the other stanchion. It was hopeless for Revere to attempt anything.

Strange as it may seem, there was a certain admiration for the sailor in Revere's mind, even in that frightful moment. He realized that the attack upon him was not inspired by any petty cause. Given the belief of the sailor, it was natural; he respected him for his desire to stop what he believed to be base

treachery; and Revere could have loved him for his willingness to sacrifice himself to prevent what he conceived to be a crime against the life of the admiral, the happiness of Emily, and the existence of the ship.

"Barry," said Revere, calmly,—he was quite master of himself now,—as the old man struck the last sound support a heavy blow with his foot, "I must tell you, not because I am afraid to die, or because I fear you, but to acquit myself of evil purpose in your mind, that my engagement with that other woman is broken; that not an hour ago, in my mother's presence, the admiral promised to give me his granddaughter to be my wife."

"The ship?" cried Barry, hoarsely, as he felt his vengeance slipping away from him, the cause itself being taken.

"I offered to buy it myself and leave it standing until it fell."

Men do not often lie in the very presence of death, and truth spoke in the younger man's voice,—truth so clear that it pierced the tortured soul of the jealous, mad, broken sailor. But, like many another man convinced against his will, he refused to accept these statements. It was a device, a cunning attempt to stay his hand and gain a life. He would not heed.

"I don't believe you, damn you!" he said, kicking furiously at the stanchion.

The last blow loosened it. Under the tremendous pressure from above, the stick began slowly, very slowly, to slide on its wooden shoe. Its motion was scarcely perceptible, yet it moved. Barry released

his hold on it, took a single backward step, and Revere rose to his feet. Barry instantly grappled him with both hands. Revere was as a child in that iron grasp. He did not struggle. He would preserve his dignity in the face of death, and to attempt to escape would have been futile, anyway. The two faces confronted one another, the sailor's convulsed with anguish and rage, the officer's pale, but smiling a little; both equally determined.

Forward and aft the rotten or sawed supports were giving way in quick succession. Above them the ship was trembling and shivering from stem to stern. A strange creaking was heard. A moaning cry, swelling into a deep groan of anguish that had a sound of despair unspeakable in it. The death-song of the ship! It was coming down on the ways! Moving toward the water at last!

Fascinated, Revere turned his face upward and watched the shivering frame above his head, murmuring, as he did so, Emily's name. The huge bulk seemed to rise in the air for a second. To his distorted vision it appeared to sway back and forth, up and down, yet it had scarcely begun to move.

Ah! was it upon them?

It all happened in a few seconds. In another it would be over. Revere closed his eyes.

At that instant a scream fraught with terrible agony broke upon the ears of the two men.

"The ship is falling!" cried Emily's voice, high-pitched, shrill with mortal terror. "Richard! What are you doing? Oh, God! Captain Barry, save him!"

"Would that she might have been spared this!" flashed into Revere's mind. He would have called to her had not something happened instantly.

The voice awakened the dormant reason in the old man's being. She loved this boy; perhaps he had told the truth.

"Save him! save him!"

The words rang in his ears. He had never disobeyed a command of hers. He would not now. Too late! There was a terrible grating sound; the last stanchion was grinding in its wooden shoe; it was sliding faster! In another moment the ship would be upon them! He had turned his head as the first cry had met his ear, and had seen in one swift glance Emily and another woman not a hundred feet away. Emily was bending forward, her hands outstretched, struggling. She would have run to them under the ship had not the other woman held her firmly, protectingly. Both girls were white as death.

Barry seized Revere by the collar and threw him violently far from him. The young man pitched downward and fell headlong on the grass in the direction of the two women. The ground sloped abruptly away toward the water on that side of the ship. In that same instant the sailor threw up two great arms and caught the impending ship. He took the place of the quivering, buckling, sliding oaken timber. For a second he stood there in mighty majesty, a pillar of strength and resolution, a tower of flesh and blood, sustaining a ship-of-the-line, a human stanchion, magnificent in the frenzied, awful expression of a

power superhuman. Rigid, unbreakable, indomitable, he shored up the ship,—Atlas holding the world!

"Go!" he gasped.

Revere, who had risen instantly, stepped toward him as if to assist him.

"Go! Can't hold——"

It had come. Angry at the momentary check, the ship fell upon the man as an avalanche falls upon the mountain. Beneath it the mighty knees were bowing, the stubborn back bending, the great arms trembling.

Revere sprang backward and slipped far down the slope.

As he fell he caught sight of burning eyes from a face white as the sea-froth, of lips set and bloodless, of jaws clinched, of sweat standing upon a bronzed forehead—picture impressed upon his soul forever!

There was a mighty roaring, detonating crash and all was over.

Crushed were the mighty arms, beaten down the massive shoulders, broken the iron knees. The life of the man went out in the fall, and the blood of his heart rippled along the blocks of the keel. With a concussion like the discharge of a battery, the mighty war-monster collapsed into a shapeless mass of timber, burying beneath it the man who had loved it best. The ship that had been his own was nothing but a heap of ruins above his still heart.

A cloud of dust rose and hung over the wreck in the quiet air.

War was to have been the trade of that ship-of-

the-line. Blood should have run upon her white decks, death she should have dealt out and received, great battles should have made her famous, heroic men should have written her name eternally on the red pages of her country's history. Now it was finished; and yet, in the ending at least, there had been a slight fulfilment of her destiny—to kill.

No struggle could have been more superb than the quiet one just over; no effort more magnificent, no conflict more terrible, than that between the man and the ship. No ship had ever claimed a nobler victim than Barry, after all, and no fate could have been more fitting than that which had come to man and ship together in the end.

The old war-vessel had lived through the still ages of peace, had survived the long period of decay, had endured the disintegrating assaults of time, only to accomplish her manifest purpose of destruction as she fell.

And the hand that had loved her was the hand that had laid her low!

With dreadful feelings in their hearts, the three stood looking at the ruins of the ship.

"Barry! Captain Barry!" screamed Emily, wildly. "Where is he?"

"There!" gasped Revere, hoarsely.

"And is there no hope?"

"None. He is gone forever. My God, wasn't it terrible? He held up the ship!"

"Grandfather!" cried the girl, distraught. "Let us run to him."

The old man still sat on the porch, staring at what had been the object of his gaze for so many years. There was a peaceful, yet sorrowful, look upon his face. He had seen the ship fall; he realized that his hour had come. He was fronting death and he knew it, yet he was as calm as he had been when he had fronted death many times years before. They gathered about him, understanding, helpless.

"Ay," he said, "the cruise is over. Where's Barry?"

"Under the ship, sir."

"And a good end! Strike the flag. I've lost my last command."

Instantly Revere ran to the foot of the staff and silently cast off the halliards. As the little blue flag of a rear-admiral, with its white stars, came floating gracefully, reluctantly, down from the masthead where it had flown so long, the veteran slowly and painfully rose to his feet. With his right hand he lifted the sword of the *Constitution*, with his old vigor and his old grace he bared the blade and brought it up before him in graceful salute, while the flag fell into Revere's arms.

"Come aboard, sir," he said, softly, as if to an Eternal Captain.

He stood erect a moment and then sank gently back into the chair. For the first time in his life he forgot the weapon in his hand. The sword fell clattering at his feet. The emblem of power, authority, and rank, all now slipping from him, lay neglected where it fell. A smile quivered upon his lips, but

otherwise he sat still and quiet, looking out into the future. A few seconds. The light faded from his eyes, the life left his heart. The ship had fallen, the flag was down. It was the end.

The old man had entered the last haven, dropped anchor in the final harbor. The little breeze which lifted his white hairs so tenderly had wafted his soul into another country, a better—that is, an heavenly!

With a low cry, Emily threw herself on her knees before him.

Down on Ship House Point a light, a flame, burst out amid the torn and shattered timbers. In a few moments the ruins of the now unheeded ship were blazing furiously. Barry had cunningly planned it so that the ship, after it had buried him, should be his funeral pyre.

Fitting it might have been, thought Revere in his heart, as he looked at the flames roaring up from the ship, if the body of the admiral, like that of the Vikings of old, might have been laid upon its burning timbers.

L'Envoi.

When he was buried, his country, recognizing his merit and remembering his services again, sent its best to honor him in death. Admiral Farragut, with a brilliant staff, was there. He was of the navy of the present, Revere represented the navy of the future, and both stood together at the grave of the navy of the past.

They buried him on the high hill overlooking Ship

House Point. Down on the Point, at the admiral's feet, as it were, and just where the ship had stood, Revere erected a huge block of rough granite which bore this inscription :

John Barry,
Chief Boatswain's Mate of the
United States Ship-of-the-Line *Susquehanna*,
Who perished in the fall of that ship, September 20th, 1865.
"*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*"

In the lofty character of his motives, in the atonement of his self-sacrifice, in the greatness of his end, his purpose of destruction was forgotten.

When his naval duties permitted, Emily and Richard often came back to the old white house on the hill in the summer, and to Charles Stewart Revere, John Barry Revere, little Emily Revere, and Richard Revere, Junior, it was the most fascinating spot on earth. They stand with their father by the huge Celtic cross which marks the admiral's resting-place, and hear again the story of the sword of the *Constitution*, destined one day to be drawn against the country in which it had been made. Or—and this they like even better—they sit with their mother (lovelier in Richard's eyes with every passing year) beneath the shadow of the mighty rock on the Point, while she tells them stories of old John Barry, and how at the last he held up the ship.

Part II

VERACIOUS TALES OF VARIOUS SORTS

"When fiction rises pleasing to the eye,
Men will believe, because they love the lie;
But truth herself, if clouded with a frown,
Must have some solemn proof to pass her down."

CHURCHILL

"'Tis strange—but true, for truth is always strange,
Stranger than fiction."

BYRON

"Variety 's the very spice of life."

COWPER

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Coups de Théâtre

"The world's a theatre, the earth a stage,
Which God and Nature do with actors fill."

Thomas Heywood

A VAUDEVILLE TURN

COMEDY

"My soul, sit thou a patient looker-on,
Judge not the play before the play is done:
The plot has many changes: every day
Speaks a new scene: the last act crowns the play."

FRANCIS QUARLES

THE most popular theatre in America, according to the advertisements, where nothing was played but the "continuous," was packed from parquet to top gallery with a perspiring crowd of pleasure-seekers one hot August night. The papers had said—*via* the society columns, of course—that everybody was out of town for the summer, and incidentally, therefore, that all the ordinary places of amusement were closed, except *Les Variétés*. However, the city was not quite deserted; for, of the anchored ninety-nine hundredths of the population, all who could do so, apparently in despair of other amusement, and attracted by the popular prices, had crowded into "the home of refined vaudeville," as it was called on the programme. The house was fluttering with fans; most of the spectators and actors felt as though they were slowly deliquescing in perspiration, but, on the whole, the audience seemed to be enjoying it.

The usual *mélange*—how natural and appropriate it seems to use French words when treating of the vaudeville!—of entertainments entirely suited even to a Mrs. Boffin, become a world-wide type of matronly modesty and virtue—had been provided by the high-minded and scrutinizing management. Ladies in short skirts capered nimbly over the stage to the "lascivious pleasing" of the banjo; gentlemen with one leg rode marvellously endowed bicycles in impossible ways; tumblers frisked and frolicked about without the slightest regard either for temperature or gravitation; happy tramps,—at least the announcements said they were happy,—whose airy, carefully tattered garments were in entire consonance with the heated atmosphere, delivered themselves of speeches full of rare old humor and fairly bristling with Bœotian witticisms. There were men singers and women singers, musical cranks, freak piano-players, monologue artists, burlesquers, and then a little play,—at least they said it was a play.

So with these multifarious stirrers-up-of-varied-emotions the evening drew toward its close. Finally, just before the biograph went through its eye-shattering, soul-distressing performance, the little boy who walked solemnly across the stage before each turn with such a queer, self-important strut that the regular patrons—those who came early and brought their luncheon—felt disappointed when he took a vacation, set out upon the racks, provided on either side of the proscenium arch for the purpose, a tablet bearing the name "Mademoiselle Hélène."

When the curtain rose thereafter the stage was set for a woodland. The lights were turned thrillingly low, so that the expectant audience were scarcely aware how the tiny little body, whom they saw standing in the full blaze of the calcium-light ray suddenly flashed upon her from the mysterious apparatus in the balcony, had reached the centre of the stage.

The little miss was apparently not more than six years old. She had short white stockings on her plump little pink legs, and her dainty feet were covered with black ankle ties. She wore fluffy little pink and white skirts like a ballet-dancer, and with her little bare arms she blew graceful kisses to the audience as she bounded before it. With her sweet blue eyes, her golden hair, she made a beautiful picture, as she pirouetted around the stage on the tips of her ten little toes, kicking up her little legs, bending her back, wriggling her skirts in imitation of older and more sophisticated performers,—to put it mildly,—which would have been more amusing if it had not been a little pitiful.

So little, so cool, so sweet, so fresh, so innocent she seemed, that in the hot theatre on that hot night no wonder a great, rapturous "oh-h-h!" of delight and approbation burst from feminine lips—and masculine ones, too, if the truth be told. As the little maid in perfect silence continued her dance, exclamations of admiration rose from the audience, and when she finished her first turn and stopped panting, bowing, hand-kissing, the theatre rang with hand-clapping. Though some of the fathers and mothers

in the audience, with thoughts of their own little folk, murmured under breaths, "What a pity! She ought to be at home in bed!" the witchery of her movements and the charm of her face were as strong upon them as they were upon the others; more so—they had children of their own.

As she stopped and stood alone on the large stage after her final *pas*, bowing again and again and throwing more kisses in that sweetly infantile way, there was a commotion among the people enjoying "standing room only" in the passage-way at the back of the parquet. A tall, broad-shouldered man forced himself through the crowd, in spite of angry remonstrances and rude resistance, and ran down the aisle. His pale face was working with emotion, his eyes shining.

"Nellie!" he cried as he ran, in a voice that vibrated above the applause in the theatre. "Don't you know me? Nellie! Nellie!" he continued, stretching out his arms toward the little girl.

The noise of clapping hands died away as if by magic, as they heard the cry, full of love and longing. The man stopped in full view of the great audience. The little girl, hearing the cry, with one hand still in the air where the kisses had stopped half blown away, looked at the man over the footlights, half-dazed, apparently, by the situation.

"Papa! Papa!" she cried, suddenly awakening to life and bounding toward him. "Papa, take me home!" Every soul in the hushed theatre heard the words in the sweet treble of childhood.

"Papa! Papa!" she cried, "take me home!"

"Where's your mother, baby?" asked the man, apparently oblivious of everything but the little lass.

"She's dead, papa," answered the child, brushing her little hand across her eyes. "I'm so glad you've found me. Oh, take me away!"

"I will! I will!" said the man, desperately, forcing his way toward the stage.

Two of the ushers and an officer had hurried down the aisle and seized him by the arms. The piano-player rose from his neglected instrument and caught him also.

"Let me go!" roared the man, shoving them aside with superhuman strength, apparently. "She's my daughter, I tell you! I will have her!"

The lights on the stage were suddenly turned up. A hard-featured man came forward and grasped the child by the arm.

"What's all this row?" he cried; "I'm the manager of Mademoiselle Hélène. Her mother left the child with me. She gets good food and clothes and is well taken care of. What more does she want?"

"I want my papa! Oh, I want you!" cried the little girl.

"And you shall have me, dear."

"No," said the man on the stage, roughly, "she shall not!"

"Gentlemen," cried the other man, turning about and facing the audience. "Friends, there is my little daughter. Her mother ran away from me, left me. I haven't seen Nellie for two years. I just happened in here to-night and recognized her, and——"

"Give him his daughter," broke out a burly man in the third row of the parquet, rising in his seat as he spoke and shaking his fist at the man on the stage, "or——"

The house was in a perfect uproar now. The women in tears, the men screaming with flushed, excited faces.

"Let him have her!"

"Give her up!"

"Let the child go with her father!"

"Shame! Shame!"

"Mob him!"

"Lynch the wretch!"

The man on the stage fairly quailed before this outburst of popular passion; the ushers and officer had released the other man, but before he could take a step the local manager appeared on the stage in the midst of the confusion. Lifting his hand to the crowd, he finally succeeded in stilling the tumult.

"I have heard it all!" he cried, as soon as he could command attention. "This theatre don't want to part father and daughter. Give the child to the man. And get out of here!" he added, turning fiercely and shaking his fist at the hard-featured man on the stage.

The latter let go the child's arm and shrank back in the wings, followed by the jeers of the crowd. Then the local manager took the little girl in his arms, stepped over the footlights, and handed her to the man who had claimed her.

He lifted her up, kissed her, and pressed her

tenderly to his breast. She clasped her little arms around his neck and dropped her head on his shoulder with a low cry of content.

"Thank you, sir!" said the man to the manager; "thank you all, ladies and gentlemen! Oh, I have got her back again!"

He turned with his precious burden and walked rapidly down the aisle, passed out of the door, and disappeared in the night.

The house rang with cheers. Men and women stood up and clapped and applauded and yelled like mad. When a semblance of order was restored, the local manager dismissed the audience. As he said, none of the performers were in condition to go on further after the little tragedy they had witnessed, which had ended so happily, after all. Nor was the audience in a mood for any more vaudeville after the bit of real life in which they had participated.

* * * * * * * *

"How did it go off, Bill?" asked the brown-haired man of the local manager in the office half an hour later.

"Fine!" said the manager. "It was the greatest act I ever saw. You did splendidly, old man. I congratulate you."

"It has only one disadvantage," remarked the hard-featured man: "you can only do it once in each town. It's only good for one-night stands."

"And didn't Nellie do it well?" returned the other.

"She did that," replied the local manager; "she

couldn't have done it better! It almost made me weep myself."

"That child's a born actress," said the hard-featured man; "she'll be a treasure some day, sure."

"She's a treasure now," replied the local manager. "What a pity we couldn't do it over to-night!"

"Do you know, men," said the brown-haired man, "I feel real guilty somehow. Seems like such a fraud——"

"Nonsense, Bill!" interrupted the manager, yet with a note of sympathy in his tone.

"Rot!" commented hard features, not the least comprehending.

"Where is she now?" asked the other, shaking his head dubiously, still uncertain and unconvinced.

"Her father and mother took her home right after the performance, and I hope she is fast asleep in her bed by this time, like a good little girl," continued the manager. "Here's your check, Bill. Be on hand Monday night when we open at X——"

THE LAST TRIBUTE TO HIS GENIUS

TRAGEDY

"I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play,
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ."

SHAKESPEARE

THE crime had been one of peculiar atrociousness. While the little old man who kept the quaint curiosity-shop down on Linden Street seemed to have few or no friends, he was blessed with a great many acquaintances, especially among the people of the better class, for whom it was quite a fad to visit the dingy, shabby little store, with its assortment of bric-a-brac, mouldy books, articles of virtu, and antiques, genuine or spurious, valuable or worthless, all heaped about in promiscuous confusion.

Indeed, the "Major" was not the least curious object in the collection. Few people knew that the title represented gallant and youthful soldiering in Rebellion days before he shrivelled and dried up in the musty little shop. When, therefore, he was found dead among his raffle of goods, about half

after seven on a summer evening, with his brains brutally beaten out by a hammer, which lay by his side, the greatest excitement was manifested everywhere. That a man should be murdered in a store on one of the main thoroughfares of the city at that hour and in that way; that the murderer should make his escape by the front door, which was left open, were in themselves sufficiently remarkable facts to engage widespread attention.

Rewards were offered by the city government; the metropolitan police force, supplemented by the best detectives that could be imported, who were paid by private subscription, worked upon the case in vain. No clew presented itself, nothing whatever was discovered. The contents of the shop were finally sold at auction and the store was closed. The estate, which was surprisingly small, contrary to the general opinion,—which, in fact, consisted merely of the proceeds of the sale of the goods,—was administered in the interests of some distant connections, and the whole affair after a short time was practically forgotten. Yet somewhere on the earth a man wandered with the guilt of murder heavy on his soul.

* * * * * * * * *

When it was announced in the advertisements that Sir Henry Irving, the great English actor, was to play *The Bells* on Thursday night, society—and those not within the charmed circle who could scrape together the unusual price demanded by the elaborate nature of Sir Henry's staging—anticipated a great intellectual treat. To see the character of Matthias inter-

preted by such a master of the tragic art could hardly be called entertaining, of course, yet anything which takes us out of the humdrum routine of every-day life and quickens the blood that beats with such commonplace sluggishness ordinarily is most desirable. It is easy, therefore, to understand the avidity with which the opportunity for paying the unusual price for being shocked and terrified was welcomed.

The play, with its damnable iteration of chiming sleigh-bells and its awful portrayal of the struggles of a crime-stained human soul against diabolic memories, proceeded with that wonderful smoothness and effectiveness for which Sir Henry's productions were famous. After the short intermission at the close of the second act, the audience, most of whom were familiar with the story, settled themselves with delicious thrills of foreboding anticipation to witness the dreadful and harrowing dénouement in which the murderer's dream—that the crime of years is at last exposed and the brand of guilt is fixed upon his honored brow—is exhibited on the stage in all its terrific realism.

The house, including the stage, was totally dark. A weird, ghastly beam of light thrown from the wings fell fitfully upon the face of Sir Henry,—no, of Matthias himself. The great actor's identity was lost, merged, forgotten in the character he portrayed. Not another thing could be perceived in the theatre. The gaze of every man and woman and child in that vast assemblage was concentrated upon that beautiful, mobile, terrible face. The silence with which the

audience listened to that piercing, shuddering voice out of the darkness was oppressive. Could one's attention have been distracted from that stage he might have caught the quickening intake of deep breaths, or here and there marked the low, quivering sighs with which nervous people, under the influence of that terrible portrayal of the agony of remorse and apprehension at detected murder, trembled, watched, and waited.

Yet there was nothing actually to be seen in the opera-house but the face of the actor, or sometimes a white, ghastly hand and a dim, dark suggestion of a body writhing in mortal torture, so keen as almost to pass belief, in a *tour de force* of unwilling confession. The detachment was perfect, the illusion was complete; there before them was a soul in judgment.

As the man was forced, under the influence of a higher power than his own, to describe the murder, the base violation of hospitality, the blow of the axe that killed a guest, by which fifteen years before he had laid the foundation of his fortune; as he was constrained to act again before his judges in hypnotic trance the awful happenings of the tragedy of that Christmas Eve, of which none had suspected him; and when, on being released from the spell, his confession was read to him by the court, and the realization came to him that the fabric of respectability which he had carefully created upon the shifting sand of murder had crashed into nothing,—who, that has seen it, or heard it, will ever forget the fearful anguish and despair of that wrecked soul?

As Matthias fell prostrate at the feet of the judges, moaning in utter desolation and abandonment, the appalling stillness was suddenly broken, and this time the sound came not from the stage. Out of the darkness of the auditorium a thin, high voice, fraught with a note of torture more real and intense, if possible, than that which the marvellous skill of the actor had produced, was hurled into the great vault of the theatre.

"No, no," it cried; "you are wrong. It was a hammer!"

The surprise of the audience for the moment held them still, while the voice shrieked out in the darkness,—

"It is enough! I'll confess. Guilty, oh, my God, guilty! It was I! The murder—light, for God's sake, light!"

A woman screamed suddenly. People rose to their feet. One of those strange, swaying movements which bespeak a panic ran through the crowd. Matthias on the stage rose instantly, faced about, and walked toward the dark footlights, a genuine horror in his soul this time, for no human voice that he had ever heard had carried such mortal pain as that which had just spoken. The theatre was filled with a babel of voices. Confused shouts and cries came from all sides.

"Lights, lights!"

"What is it?"

"Go on with the performance!"

At that instant the lights were turned up. There,

in the middle aisle, a few rows from the orchestra rail, a tall, thin man, his haggard face white with emotion, his eyes staring, his teeth clinched 'neath bloodless lips, stood swaying unsteadily to and fro. His hands uplifted as if to ward off a blow, he stood utterly oblivious of everything but Matthias. From the chair beside him a woman with a face scarcely less white, in which were mingled incredulity, surprise, and horror, reached her arms up to him as if to save him.

"I can't stand it any longer!" cried the man, staring up at Matthias. "You've done it. I'll confess all! It has torn me to pieces!" he screamed, clutching at his throat. "The Major—I beat him to death with his hammer, like you did, for his money. I took it from his person. I knew it was there. I was his friend, his only friend. My God! There was no place to burn his body. He's always at my feet. He's staring at me now by you on the stage!"

Sir Henry shrank away involuntarily as the man went on.

"Pity, pity!" he wailed, staggering, stumbling forward, falling upon his knees nearer to Sir Henry. "Mercy!" he whispered at last, yet with such distinctness that they heard him in every corner of the theatre.

He knelt with his hands outstretched toward the stage, waiting for reprieve, sentence, condemnation,—God knows what.

The audience stared likewise with suspended hearts from the great but mimic figure of murder

on one side of the footlights to the greater and real figure of murder upon the other. As they gazed the man wavered forward again, sank lower, his hands fell, but before he collapsed completely, an officer of the law, the first to recover his wits in the presence of the catastrophe, ran down the aisle and pounced upon him. Grasping his shoulder, he cried,—

"You're my prisoner. I arrest you!"

"Too late," whispered the man; "I'm—going—going—to plead—in another—court."

He pitched forward and fell on his face—dead. And a woman, dry-eyed with horror, old love surviving honor, respect, righteousness, knelt by his side, took his head in her arms, and strove to kiss away from his brow the mark of Cain.

So the mystery of the Major's murder was solved at last, and Sir Henry, as he thought it over in his chamber that night, realized that he had received the greatest tribute that mortal man could pay to his acting. His art had been so perfect—he had appeared the incarnation of terror, remorse, and retribution—that to that struggling soul he had been as the voice of conscience,—nay, as the very voice of God. For the man had actually given way, broken down, and confessed a secret crime under the mighty spell of his acting, and, as the criminal in the play, had died in the confession!

Out of the West

"The sun sets fair in that Western land,
Romance rides over the plains;
There hearts are gay at the close of day,—
Man's duty's done, God reigns."

Warren Giles

IN OKLAHOMA

AN IDYL OF THE PRAIRIE IN THREE FLIGHTS

"The sun lay dying in the west,
The fresh breeze fanned my brow,
I rode the steed I loved the best—
Would I were riding now."

I.—THE FIRST FLIGHT

MOST written stories end with a wedding, actual or prospective; but this story, like most stories in real life, begins with one. The little old stone church in Manhattan, Kansas, was crowded to the doors one June afternoon. The gray-haired President, the younger men and women of the faculty, and a small sprinkling of the townspeople were there; but the great mass of the congregation was made up of the students of the State Agricultural College, which was situated on a gentle hill just outside the town. It was Graduation Day, and the day on which Sue Belle Seville and Samuel Maxwell had elected to get married.

Samuel was a Kansas boy, Sue Belle a Kentucky girl. They were both orphans and both graduates from the college that day in the same class: Samuel from the agricultural and mechanical department, Sue Belle from the housekeeping, culinary, domestic

sciences, and other of the many departments feminine. Maxwell was a manly, energetic, capable fellow, a good student, and a young man who, given an equal chance, should make a fine farmer. On that day he was the envy of all the young men of marriageable age in the college.

His bride to be, while she seemed made for better things than the ineffably monotonous drudgery of an ordinary farmer's wife, was nevertheless skilled enough, capable enough, resolute enough, to master her lot and be happy in it whatever it might be. She was a handsome girl, tall, straight, strong, black-haired, blue-eyed, with the healthiest whiteness in her face that one could imagine.

The brief wedding ceremony was soon over. Old Dr. Fairman, the President, gave the bride away in his usual courtly and distinguished manner, and as the village organist played the wedding-march on the sweet-toned old organ, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Maxwell passed out of the church, followed by all of the congregation. At the end of the long cinder foot-path extending from the church-door under the double row of trees to the street stood a brand-new Studebaker wagon filled with household goods. Two stout, well-conditioned horses were harnessed to it, while two others, a good mare and a handsome young horse, a three-year-old colt, were fastened to the tail-board by long hitching-straps. The wagon had been transformed by a canvas canopy over the bed into what was popularly known as a "prairie schooner." The new canvas was white as snow in the sunlight.

Maxwell handed his wife to the seat on the front, pitched quarters to the negro boys who had been holding the horses' heads, gathered up the reins, and, amid a storm of cheers and a shower of rice—especially appropriate to an agricultural college, by the way—and other manifestations of joy and delight, drove away on the wedding journey. The watchers followed with their eyes the wagon lumbering slowly down the main street until it crossed the bridge over the Kansas River and disappeared among the hills to the southward.

After settling the expenses of their college course and paying for their outfit, the two young people found themselves in possession of some two thousand dollars between them ; more than enough, they fancied, backed as it was—or should I say led?—by two stout hearts and by four strong young arms, to wrest a livelihood—nay, a fortune, perhaps—from the prairies of the West.

An old, old story, this. A pair of home-builders going out into a new land to conquer or die ; to establish another outpost of civilization on the distant frontier, or to fail. A man and a woman who had taken their all in their hands to consecrate it by their toil to the service of humanity, and to stake their happiness on the success of their endeavor. True builders of the nation, they! Pickets they were, going ahead of the advance guard of the army of civilization's marchers, which, untold ages ago, started in some secluded nook in the far Orient, and, impelled by an irresistible desire for conquest, in

successive waves of emigration, has at last compassed the globe, rolled around the world. Leaders, these two, of that mighty deluge of men and women for whom the sun of hope is ever rising,—but rising in the West.

Never was such a wedding journey. It was spring-time in the most bountiful and fertile year that had come to the great State for a generation. The way of the lovers, as they plodded ever southward and westward, led them now past vast fields of yellowing wheat already beginning to ripen for the thresher. Sometimes they drove for miles through towering walls of broad-bladed, cool, green corn; sometimes the trail led them over the untilled, treeless prairies covered with tall, nodding sunflowers in all their gorgeous golden bloom,—blossoms which gave the State a name; and not infrequently their way would take them alongside a limpid river, in that happy season bank full from the frequent rains, where the winding road would be overhung by great trees.

They stopped at night at the different little towns through which their way passed, and once in a while they enjoyed the hearty welcome of a lone farm-house. Sometimes they hired a negro boy to drive the wagon from one stopping-place to another, while they mounted the two led horses and galloped over the prairie. Samuel rode well, but to see Sue Belle on that spirited young steed of hers was to see the perfection of dashing horsemanship. An instinctive judge of horse-flesh, she had bought that three-year-old herself. He was a chestnut sorrel with a white blaze

on his face, and white forefeet, as handsome and spirited as his mistress. In honor of her native State, she called him Kentucky.

As they progressed farther and farther southwestward the land became more open, the farm-houses were greater distances apart, cultivated fields less frequent, the towns were fewer in number and diminishing in size, the rivers grew smaller and smaller, and trees almost vanished from the landscape. Finally, away out in Cimarron County, where the railroad stopped and civilization ended, they reached their journey's end. Such a wedding-trip they had enjoyed, such a honeymoon they had spent!

They bought a bit of flower-decked prairie, a quarter section crossed in one corner by a little creek flowing southward until it joined a larger steam flowing into the Arkansas River. The chosen land mostly lay on the south side of a slight elevation from which they could survey the grass-mantled plains melting into the unbroken horizon miles and miles away. The country about was entirely uncultivated and had been mainly given over to cattle-raising; it was a dozen miles to the nearest house and fifteen to the town of Apache, the county-seat.

How still was that vast expanse of gently undulating land of which they were the centre! An ocean caught in a quiet moment, and every smoothly rolling wave petrified, motionless. How vast was the firmament above them! To lie in the grass at night and stare up into its blue unclouded distance filled with stars—shone they ever so gloriously anywhere else on the

globe?—was to reduce one's self to a vanishing point in the infinite universe of God. Lonely? Yes, to ordinary people, perhaps, but not to these two home-builders. They were young, they were together, they were lovers, and they had to do prosaic, God-given labor.

So they pitched their stakes upon the verdant hill, and, toiling early and late, built there for themselves and those to come a home. With iron share they tore the virgin sod; with generous hands they sowed the seed; with all the hope of youth and love bourgeoning and blossoming in their breasts, they began the earth-old process of wresting a living from the tillage of the soil. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." So ran the primal truth. Ah, yes, but this time counted not a curse but a privilege, and enjoyed not without but within an Eden.

II.—THE SECOND FLIGHT

Spring-time again upon the farm, and they were bidding it good-by. Five years have dragged away, years filled with little but misfortune—years of freezing winters, burning summers, drought, or storm. Five lean years of failure, unprecedented but true. A long, deadly, paralyzing struggle with that terrible minatory face of nature which, thank God! is usually turned away from humanity, else we could not bear the sight. The sun had beaten upon the farm and burnt it up, the parasites had swarmed over the field and eaten it down, the winter cold had frozen the life out of it, the fierce storms had swept over it and torn

it away,—winter and summer had been alike against them.

Last fall the deadly mortgage had grown from the little hand-breadth cloud until it had covered the land, blanketed it, blighted it, filled earth and sky to them. It was over. They had toiled for naught, and no profit had they taken of all their labor under the sun. They were beaten at last.

Once more the old Studebaker wagon. Within it a haggard, dogged, disappointed man,—yet indomitable; a woman still young, robbed forever of the brightness of youth, yet striving to nourish a spark of the old hope,—a mother, too. Two little children clung to her, healthy, lusty, strong, happy; they had neither known nor suffered. There was the same old team between the "tugs," sobered, quieted, saddened like their master, perhaps, and Kentucky. Kentucky was leaner than he should be, not so well nourished as they would like to have him, but his spirit was unabated. He, at least, had not been beaten down.

So they set forth again. "Once more into the breach," brave pair. Life insistently craves bread. Men must work; ay, and women, too, though they may weep as well. There were the little children, oh, father and mother! treasure of health and teaching must be laid up for them. The old cause must be tried out yet again. Farewell to defeat, farewell to failure, farewell to the old. Let us stir up hope again, look forward into the future, deserve a triumph. All had been lost but love; that had not failed, and

while God is it cannot. It is a mighty talisman with which to attempt the morrow. So armed, they started out again.

With one hundred dollars in his pocket, a small lot of household necessaries, a stove, some blankets, etc., and Kentucky, Samuel Maxwell and Sue Belle and the two children started out in the wagon again to have another wrestle with fortune. They determined to go to the Kansas-Indian Territory border and try to secure free land in Oklahoma Territory, which was to be opened for settlement that summer.

They hated the prairie where they had lived now. It was associated with their ruin, eloquent of their future. That season bade fair to be as bountiful a time as had been the year of their arrival, but they could not stay. They had pulled up the stakes, and nothing was left for them but to go on. Indeed, they were wishful to do so, and had they known that, as it happened, the five years of starvation, drought, and failure were to be succeeded by twice as many years of abounding plenty, they would not have stayed. They loathed the spot. They could not have remained anyway. Another man held the farm and succeeded where they had failed, reaping where they had sown.

It was late summer when they reached Solomon City, from which they had elected to make the run into the hitherto forbidden land. The place was filled with all sorts and conditions of men and women attracted by the possibility of getting a quarter section or a town lot practically free in the Cherokee strip;

there were half a million of them on the border-line! And there, too, were congregated the human vultures that live to prey upon the crowd.

The distribution of the lots and sections was to be made on the principle of first come first served. All seekers for locations were to line up on the edge of the strip on a given date at a certain hour, and when a signal was given they were to rush into the Nation, drive a stake in a quarter section, or in a town lot at the places where the towns had previously been surveyed and lots plotted and staked out by the government, throughout the vast body of land in the Indian Territory thrown open for settlement. Then they were to hold their places, living in tents and shanties, until they could erect houses and prove their claims.

Samuel intended to ride Kentucky into the strip and take his chance at a town lot. He had had enough of farms. Not many miles below Solomon City, on the railroad running through the "strip,"—as the land was called,—the future town of Newlands had been laid out by the surveyors. It was a paper town as yet, but the day after the run would see it suddenly become a city, and good lots would probably be of value. If he could get a good one it might be worth several thousand dollars, and he could start again. It was a desperate chance, but he had to take it; there was nothing else.

Ill fortune was not yet done with them, however, for in scrambling down the bank of the river to get water for his team, the unfortunate man fell and broke his arm. He climbed up to the wagon, sank down

on the dry grass beside it, and gave way. Sue Belle stood by with white face as the local doctor bound up his arm, but she did not cry. She felt that she had other things to do, that she must play the man, and that she could not indulge in the womanly luxury of weeping.

"I'm not crying, doctor, because it hurts," said Samuel, brushing away his tears with his uninjured arm; "but because this seems to be just the last straw in our bad luck. We were married five years ago, and we bought a farm in Cimarron. I'm a good farmer, I was born on a farm and raised on it, and I was trained in the Agricultural College in Kansas. I know the thing theoretically and practically, too, but everything failed us. We've lost everything, and we came here in the hope of getting something out of the strip. God's forgot us, I guess."

The doctor had seen many cases like that in the Southwest, and, though his heart was profoundly touched, he could do nothing.

That night Samuel lay awake in the wagon almost forgetting the pain in his arm wondering what would become of them. He had lugged out his old leather purse and counted the money that was left,—ten dollars! That was all that stood between them and starvation! The strip was to be opened to-morrow, the run would take place then. What, in God's name, could he do?

"Sam," said Sue Belle, lying awake by his side, "don't give way so!"

"Give way, dear!" he groaned. "How can I help

it? Ten dollars between you and the children and starvation! This town here can't help any one. These people around us can't. Look at them! They're as poor as we are. Five years of crop failure has hit them as hard as it has hit us. The run takes place to-morrow, and I can't ride. I did hope that I could get a town lot in Newlands. I don't believe that anything here can outrun Kentucky; but now—oh, my God! my God!"

"Sam dear, I'll ride Kentucky."

She spoke resolutely, having thought quickly, and her mind was made up.

"We've got no side-saddle," answered the man; "you know we sold it."

"I can ride astride," said the woman, having covered this point also in her mind. "I used to ride that way when I was a girl. I've done it hundreds of times, and I can make better time that way now."

"But, dear, you're a woman, and——"

"I can wear your clothes, dear. I'm almost as tall as you are. They'll be rather large, but——"

"Oh, Sue Belle, I can't allow you to go in there alone, in all that crowd, with——"

"I've got to do it, Sam! It's our last chance. It's for the children, not ourselves. We could die. We've done our best. But think of them!"

She rose from her bed and crept over to the back of the wagon where the little boy and girl lay sprawling side by side in the dreamless sleep of childhood. She pushed from the baby brows the curly hair matted with perspiration, and stooped and kissed

them. She felt so strong, so brave, so resolute, as if the burden which she had hitherto shared with Samuel, or from which he had tried to spare her, had suddenly fallen upon her own shoulders, and in some strange way that she had been given strength to bear it.

Long time that night husband and wife talked over the situation. In the face of her determination the man could not do otherwise than give consent. In the morning, making him as comfortable as she could, she plodded up through the dust to the city and bought from the wondering shopkeeper a pair of high boots that fitted her, since it would be impossible for her to use her husband's huge ones. At Sam's insistent demand, she also hired for five dollars a poor stranded negro, who looked honest and faithful, to drive the wagon after her into the strip. That exhausted their ready money.

It was half after eleven o'clock when she returned to the wagon. The doctor had been there, and had done what he could for her fevered husband, but his arm still pained fearfully. He was up, however,—he had to be,—and seated on the dusty grass in the shadow of the canvas top. The children were playing about him. Bidding the negro boy hitch up the team, Sue Belle slipped under the wagon-cover and dropped the curtain. When she came out her tall form was encased in her husband's only remaining suit of clothes. She wore a soft felt hat with her hair tightly twisted under it. A loose shirt, trousers, and the new boots completed her costume.

Womanlike, she had tied a blue silk handkerchief —last treasure-trove from her trousseau—around her neck. There was a painful flush upon her thin face and her eyes were filled with tears.

Samuel groaned and shook his head, the negro boy gazed with mouth wide open, his eyes rolling, and little Sue Belle shrank away from her mother garbed in this strange manner. Kentucky, who had been given the last measure of oats they possessed, did not recognize her until she spoke, and then he stared at her in a wondering way as she saddled and bridled him. A hatchet and a tent-peg tied securely to the saddle completed her preparations. By her husband's insistence she strapped a spur on her boot, although, as she said, she had never put a spur to Kentucky in her life.

"You may have to do it now, dear," said Maxwell, and to please him she complied.

Nobody paid any attention whatever to her, although the boundary was lined, as far as eye could see and for miles beyond, with crowds of people intending to make the run. On the very edge of the strip the runners had assembled on horseback or muleback, on bicycles, in buggies, sulkies, or in road wagons, and there were many dressed in jerseys and running shoes who intended to make the run on foot. Back of them in long lines were grouped wagons of all descriptions, mostly filled with women and children. All sorts and conditions of men were represented in the huge and motley throng.

It was a blazing hot day. The shifting horde

raised clouds of dust above the line, from which the bare, treeless prairie stretched away southward for miles. There was not a soul on it except United States cavalrymen, who were spread out in a long line, each man being placed at a regular interval from his neighbor. To the front of the troopers, the captain in command sat his horse, holding his watch in his left hand to determine the correct time, while in his right he carried a cocked revolver.

Twelve o'clock was the appointed hour. The soldiers on either side held their loaded carbines poised carefully and looked toward the captain, or, if too far away to see him, toward the next in line who could. The signal for the start was to be given simultaneously over the whole extended strip, stretching for many miles along the Kansas border, by means of these troopers. No one was to move until the signal was given. The soldiers had scoured the country for days to evict the "sooners,"—those who had gone in before the appointed time and attempted to conceal themselves that they might secure the best lots.

Sue Belle turned and kissed the babies. Then she bent toward Samuel, but he rose painfully to his feet and stood flushed and feverish while he pressed her to his side with his sound arm.

"May God protect you, dear," he said, trembling with pain and agitation.

"He will! He will!" exclaimed the woman, fervently, strong in her endeavor. "Now be sure and have the wagon follow right after me. And you

know the doctor said he'd get you taken in some place in town as soon as the run began; there'll be lots of room there then. I'm going to ride straight down to Newlands and try for a town lot. They'll find me there. They ought to be there by evening, and I'll manage somehow till then."

"But how'll you live till I get there?"

"I can cook or wash for hire; there'll be lots to do there, and I'll write to you at once. Don't worry about me, dear. I'm half crazy to think of leaving you ill and alone——"

"I wish you had a revolver, Sue Belle," groaned Samuel.

"I wish I had, too," answered the woman; "but never mind, we are in God's hands."

"Oh, Sue Belle, I can't let you go!"

"You must! I must go now! See! They're getting ready!"

She tore herself away from him and spoke to the colored boy.

"Joe," she said, "for God's sake, don't fail us! I leave you my two little children; if you guard them safely and bring them to me faithfully, whatever good fortune comes to us you shall share."

"'Deed I will, suh, ma'am, miss,—yes, suh," stammered the colored boy. "I'll tek good caah on 'em, mista—lady," he added, in his confusion.

III.—THE THIRD FLIGHT

Without another word the woman sprang on the horse and forced herself as near the line as she could.

She had lost an opportunity of getting in the very front rank, but she knew her horse and did not care for that. It wanted perhaps a minute to twelve o'clock, and a silence settled down over the rude assemblage, although the excitement was at fever heat. Pushing and jostling would gain no advantage now. The gray old captain of cavalry sat his horse, intently gazing at his watch. The seconds dragged and the multitude waited breathlessly. Suddenly he closed it with a snap, lifted his pistol in the air, and before the smoke of the discharge blew away a quick volley rang along the line.

With a sort of a roar that echoed up into the heavens for miles the runners sprang forward. There was one mighty simultaneous surge of men and animals, and then the line began to break. In the cloud of dust that arose instantly, Maxwell, forgetful of his broken arm, strove vainly to follow with his gaze Sue Belle's flying figure. The next moment he noticed that the ground directly in front of him was deserted. An idea flashed into his mind. Regardless of his pain, he sprang to his feet, with his uninjured arm tore a loose bed-slat from the wagon, and, stepping across the line, thrust it into the finest quarter section of the strip. Nobody had thought of doing this. The land adjoined the town of Solomon City, and could probably be sold without delay for a good sum of money. It was his. They were saved!

Oh, why hadn't he thought of it before and prevented his wife from making the run? But it was too late; she was gone. Calling the negro, he had

him take from the wagon a few of the boards which had been brought along for the purpose, and nail them together in a tent shape to make him a shelter. Laying a blanket and a quilt on the ground, and setting a bucket of water therein, he crawled under it, knowing that some one sent by the doctor would certainly come to him during the day, and determined to hold his claim if he died for it. Then he bade Joe load the children in the wagon, take them into the strip, tell his wife of his good fortune, and bid her come back to him, if she could.

What of the woman riding on with a broken heart, yet with a grim determination somehow to achieve fortune for her sick husband and her children? She kept Kentucky well in hand, and yet easily passed buggies, sulkies, runners, men on bicycles, and began to overtake the horsemen galloping southward over the prairie. At first the dust almost choked her. The man's saddle annoyed her, too; but as she got into clear air, and began to get accustomed to the strangeness of her position, she regained her self-control. She shook the reins lightly over the horse, and he lengthened his stride and quickened his speed, making swift progress for a long time.

Finally there was no one in front of her. To the right and left, as far as she could see, horsemen were galloping on; back of her they trailed in an ever-thinning mass. Most of them she was leaving rapidly. Kentucky was of racing stock. He was three-quarter-bred and game to the core. The sight of the other horses running by his side inspired him.

He had been ridden in a wild dash across the prairie many a time, but never before in competition with other horses. He took to the race instinctively, and galloped on as if he had been trained to it from the beginning.

She had hard work to hold him, yet she knew she had a long ride before her, and if she did not keep him well in hand he would be blown before he went half the distance ; so she held him down to it, riding warily, watching carefully for prairie-dog holes, for if the horse should thrust his leg into one he would break it, and that would be the end of him and her ride as well.

So she galloped on and on, still in the front line, and with every surging leap leaving some beaten runner behind. Now she drew ahead, now she led the whole vast throng, and now the horse was out of hand. He was running magnificently, but he had gotten away from her, not viciously, but in pure joy at being free in this mad race over the prairie. Presently she looked back. The nearest rider seemed to be half a mile behind her. It was not necessary for her to get so far ahead, and she tried again and again to check the horse, but without success.

Kentucky was running his own race now. How he swept through the air ! It was magnificent ! The exhilaration of the motion got into her blood. It was long since she had had such a ride. She, too, came of racing stock, and the habit of her sires reasserted itself in her being. For a moment she forgot Samuel, forgot the children. She forgot everything

but that wide open prairie, the wind blowing across her face, the rapid rise and fall of the horse as he raced madly on. Youth came back to her and the joy of life; failure lay behind, success before. Her heart beat faster in her breast. Kentucky gallantly carried her forward. How long had she been riding? She could not tell. They were not at Newlands yet, she was certain, so she raced away. After a long time she looked back and was astonished to see two riders nearer to her than any had been when she had looked before; all the rest were miles behind.

The men were mounted on broncos,—the horse *par excellence* of the West,—wild, vagrant descendants of old Spanish breeds; animals without blood, without birth, without beauty, without style, without training, mean and vicious in disposition; utterly useless for a short dash, and in an ordinary race unable to approach a thoroughbred; but with a brutal, indomitable spirit, a capacity for unlimited endurance and tireless ability to run long distances and live on nothing, and do it day after day, which made them formidable and dangerous competitors for all other horses of whatsoever quality. They were loping along after her with an ugly yet very rapid gait, which they could keep up all day if necessary.

Sue Belle thought Kentucky's stride was not quite so sweeping as it had been; he seemed to be a little tired; still, he was doing his best manfully. Although he yet held the lead, he was not built for this kind of a run. She realized it, but there was nothing she

could do to husband his strength, nothing left her but to gallop on. And yet there was lots of go in him yet. He was by no means done.

The prairie rolled away back of them as it was compassed by the flying feet, and still the mighty ride went on. The first bronco was nearer now. He was not quite a mile away, but the second was a longer distance behind the first and falling back. The rest were nowhere. Of all the throng only these three were in sight. Kentucky was very tired. Surely they must be near Newlands now! The other horse was coming up fast. She shook out the reins and called to her own. The pursuer was nearer! He was so near that at last Kentucky realized that he was being pursued. They were almost there! In front of them on the horizon she saw the land-office, the station, and the hundreds of white stakes marking the lots of the town.

The other horse was almost beside her now. Well, suppose he did win the race? There were hundreds of lots there, and the second choice would probably be as good as the first. Should she let him pass? No! That was not the Kentucky way. Should the horse do it? No, again. She leaned forward over the saddle and spoke to him; she drove the spur into him at last. The surprised horse bounded into the air with a sudden access of vigor, and he fairly leaped away from the bronco. It was his final effort; when this spurt was ended he would be done for. Would it be enough?

In her excitement she turned and shouted back to

The surprised horse bounded into the air with a sudden access of vigor

the man, she knew not what, waving her hat in disdain. Presently she turned into what appeared to be the main street. Instinctively as they ran along she chose what seemed to be the best lot in the prospective city, and then reined in her panting, exhausted horse; she sprang to the ground, tore the peg and hatchet from the saddle-bow, and drove the stake in the lot. Not a moment too soon, with not a second to spare, she had won the race! The wild bronco came thundering upon her heels. The man jerked his horse to his haunches by the side of the triumphant thoroughbred, dropped a rein to the ground to keep him, sprang from the saddle, and stepped toward her.

"I want that there lot!" he said, roughly. "It's the best lot in the place. You kin take somethin' else."

Sue Belle rose to her feet. Her hat had fallen off in the wild ride and her black hair floated over her shoulders. Excitement had put a light in her eyes, color in her cheeks. She looked handsome, almost young again,—altogether beautiful. The man was right. She could see that she had succeeded in getting the best lot in the city. As she stood up the man stared at her wonderingly. He was a cowboy,—fringed trousers, bearskin chaparejos, loose shirt, broad hat, Mexican spurs, and all.

"Good God!" he shouted. "It's a woman!"

"Yes, I am a woman," answered Sue Belle, desperately.

"Well, I'm d—d!" he burst out.

"You've ordered me away from the lot, but—" she went on, heedless of his interruption.

"Well, gimme a kiss, sis, an' you kin stay on it," said the man, with a hideous leer.

Sue Belle looked around desperately. She was practically alone on the prairie save for this man and the other one, now about a mile distant. The station and land-office were too far away for her to summon assistance from them. She was absolutely helpless, entirely in this man's power.

"Will you let me alone if I do?" she asked, at last.

"Oh, come, now, you're too pretty to be left alone, my dear," said the man, coming closer.

Resisting the impulse to shriek, she faced him hatchet in hand. With swift feminine instinct she comprehended him in a glance. He was just an ordinary kind of a cowboy, bad when his bad side was uppermost, but capable of all sorts of nobility and self-sacrifice if his good side could be reached. She thought swiftly then,—she had to. She made up her mind to appeal to him.

"Wait," she said; "don't come nearer until I speak to you. You're right, I am a woman. I have a husband and two children. We had a little fortune which we put into a farm in Cimarron County five years ago. Through a succession of misfortunes we've lost every dollar. We have nothing except a team and this horse. We came down here to try to get something for our children. Yesterday my husband fell and broke his arm. He was going to ride

in here. He could not do it. I had to make the run in place of him. I left him alone, back there on the edge of the strip, with his broken arm. With the last ten dollars we had on earth I bought these boots and employed a negro boy whom I never saw before to bring my little children after me. I want this lot. I won it fairly. It's the best lot in the town. But you are a man; you are stronger than I. You may—" she flushed painfully, "kiss me if you must,—if you will give me your word of honor that after that you will leave me this lot. You understand that I—I—only submit to it—for the sake of the children and for my poor husband."

Her eyes were full of tears now, as she clasped her hands, looked at him appealingly, and waited with burning face, trembling lips, and heaving bosom.

"Ma'am," said the cowboy, his face also flushing under his tan, as he took off his sombrero, "I don't want no kiss. Leastways, I don't take no kiss under these circumstances. You kin have that there lot. I jist rode in yere fer the fun of the thing. I don't want no lot nohow. What'd I do with it? Sell it fer booze. You beat me on the square, though if it had been five miles farther I'd a beat you. Them Kentucky hosses—I 'low he's a Kentucky hoss?—ain't no good fer long-distance runnin' side this flea-bitten bronc. I don't want no lot noways. You stay right here on that there lot, an' fer fear less'n somebody might come along an' try to make you give it up, I'll stay with you with my gun handy."

"Thank you and God bless you," said Sue Belle, gratefully, looking at him with swimming eyes.

Then she put her head down on Kentucky's saddle, where the horse stood cropping the short grass, threw her arm around his neck, and sobbed as if her heart would break. The cowboy surveyed her in astonishment and terror; but, before he could say anything, the second man came racing up.

"Well, you two young fellows have the best lots in the place, I suppose. I'll have to take what's left," said the newcomer, cheerfully. "Great Jupiter! what's that fellow crying about?"

"'Taint a feller," said the cowboy, "it's a female, a woman."

"A woman!" exclaimed the other. "Say, you cowboy," with an ugly look on his face, "have you been making a woman cry?"

"I reckon I hev," answered the cowboy, nonchalantly.

"You infernal—" exclaimed the man, stepping toward him.

"Oh!" cried Sue Belle, raising her head, "he didn't. I'm crying for joy!"

As he caught sight of her the man bowed instantly toward her with the grace of a gentleman who recognized under any accident of clothes a lady.

"My husband is ill," said Sue Belle, swiftly divining another friend, one of another class, too; "he broke his arm yesterday, and I had to take our horse and ride here for him and the two little children, and this gentleman——"

"Say, you cowboy, have you been making a woman cry?"

"Lord!" said the cowboy, "I ain't no gent. I'm a cow-puncher."

"This gentleman came after me and promised to protect me from everybody. And that is why I cried."

"Sir," said the second man, extending his hand, "I beg your pardon for my suspicions. You are a gentleman."

"Nobody never called me one before," growled the cowboy, much embarrassed, shaking the proffered hand awkwardly but heartily. "I don't care fer no lot myself an' I'm goin' to hold this lot next to hern fer the little kids."

"Well, that's just about what I came for, too. I'm a student, a senior at Columbia College, New York, madam," he said, turning to Sue Belle, "out here for the summer to look after some of my father's Kansas property. I thought I'd run down here just for the fun of it. You said you had two children, did you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Allow me. I will hold the lot on the other side of you for the other one. So you see, with this gentleman and myself, you will be surrounded and protected by the east and the west."

Before the afternoon was half gone all the lots in Newlands had been appropriated, lumber had been brought in, portable houses and tents erected, saloons opened, a daily paper started, and the young Bishop of Oklahoma was on the ground organizing a church; the place was actually assuming the appearance of a

city even in so short a time. The story of Sue Belle's ride had been told everywhere by her gallant flankers, and by common consent the focus of activity for the city of Newlands was centred about those three lots. The happy, grateful woman could have sold them a hundred times at an increasing price had she chosen to do so.

Late in the afternoon Joe came up with the wagon and the children. He had been faithful to his trust. Sue Belle was very much frightened when she learned that her husband had secured a claim. She knew he would endeavor to hold it, and she feared extremely for him lying ill and alone on the prairie. Leaving the children in the care of some of the women who had followed their husbands on the trail, with the promise of the whole town that her three lots would be held inviolate for her, accompanied by her two faithful, self-constituted guardians, she mounted the refreshed Kentucky again and rode back to her husband, lying alone, half delirious, in his shed on the prairie, clinging desperately to his quarter section.

Thus the tide changed at last and now came flooding in with fortune.

PASSING THE LOVE OF WOMAN

THE END OF A FRONTIER TELL

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

THE BIBLE

THERE were but two women in the camp, Martie was one of them, and Martie was the cause of it. The statement that it was on account of her they quarrelled, and it was through the quarrel the terrible state of affairs was brought about, cannot be denied.

Martie and her mother—her mother was the other woman in the camp, and, except that she had been responsible for Martie years before, she didn't particularly count—had come to the rough little mining settlement with Martie's father, a mining engineer, who represented certain speculative holdings in the East which needed personal attention.

Before they arrived the camp had been a fairly peaceable one: the boys got drunk just about so often, once in a while there was a shooting affair, but Medicine Dog was as orderly a camp as might have been found in Colorado, until Martie came. It was a serpent, I believe, that introduced the trouble

in the Garden of Eden. I wonder what the wild beasts thought of the advent of Eve. At any rate, Martie first reformed and then disorganized Medicine Dog.

Following her arrival there was an ebullition of "boiled shirts,"—come by express in response to telegraphic communications with Denver, the first evidence of the reform. This was followed by the influx of a lone Chinaman, imported for the reboiling of the said shirts, his life, liberty, and the peaceful pursuit of his vocation over the tubs being guaranteed him by the camp, the second evidence of the reform. There was a consequent amelioration of manners, proportioned to the prevalence of shirt bosom, too. "Boiled shirts"—I use the language of the camp—are the beginning of that civilization of which "plug hats" are the end. Medicine Dog never got that far, except in its dreams; even Martie was not quite equal to promoting the "plug hat."

The saloon, too, felt the good—or evil, according to the point of view—effect of Martie's presence, and the wonderful part of it was that Big Sam, who dispensed liquor, profanity, and on occasions, if necessary, bullets from his "Colt's 45," from behind the bar, bore the situation philosophically. He was as much under Martie's sway as anybody else. That was the last evidence of the reform. And when a preacher—a wandering missionary—came along, Big Sam cheerfully, if temporarily, suspended business one Sunday morning and they had services in the saloon, the preacher on the counter to conduct them,

and Martie on a table where they could all see her, with a portable organ to lead the singing.

That was the only time Martie's presence graced the saloon. The effect of her presence there was lasting. The boys could hardly swallow their whiskey during that or the next day.

"It tastes as if it had sugar in it," said Dan Casey, mournfully, subtly referring to the sweetening effect of Martie's visit. When it came to choosing between Martie and whiskey, the difficulties of the situation were enough to appall the stoutest heart in Medicine Dog.

Casey signified his change of heart in the matter of clothing by trimming his beard—there was no barber in the camp yet—and by adding a green tie to his shirt, and when MacBurns appeared with a yellow silk streamer across his bestarched bosom, Casey took it as a direct reflection upon his religious and political views, and for a time Medicine Dog threatened to resume its pristine liveliness.

The quarrel was compromised by Martie; for when she artfully caused the news to be circulated that she doted on red or blue ties and could not abide green or yellow ones, Casey and MacBurns discarded the colors of their choice and settled the affair by wearing Martie's.

Martie wore those colors herself. She was the reddest-cheeked, bluest-eyed, and bonniest girl that had ever come across the mountains, so Medicine Dog swore unanimously, at any rate. As occasion served, the various members of the camp maintained

Martie's cause with strenuous and generally fatal effect to various gentlemen from other camps who were rashly inclined to question the assertion. Martie would have shone anywhere in the open air, and in womanless Medicine Dog she was a heroine, a queen. That was the beginning of disorganization, too.

The two men hardest hit were Jack Elliott and Dick Sanderson. Elliott was a jolly, happy-go-lucky fellow born in the East, Sanderson a quieter man from the middle West, who complemented his companion admirably. They worked a rich claim together on the mountain side with good results. They were steady-going fellows and both were dead shots with the rifle. They were great-hearted young men, who loved each other with an affection that some men develop under certain circumstances for one another until a woman intervenes. Martie intervened. Both men fell in love with her, and as they were men of education,—being fellow-graduates of the old University of Pennsylvania,—they were not content with the mere blind adoration which the rest of Medicine Dog exhibited. They wanted Martie, and as the days grew longer and they knew her better, they wanted her more and more.

Each man dreamed dreams of a house on the mountain side overlooking the camp with Martie as its mistress and with himself as titular, if not actual, master. There had never been a wedding celebrated in the valley, and they were both united upon the desirability of having one. Each one, however, wanted to be the bridegroom!

Martie recognized the difference between these two men and the rest of the camp, although in no way did they hold themselves aloof from the general society of Medicine Dog—that would not have been tolerated by the rest of the boys. She realized that either of them might legitimately aspire to her hand, for they were in an entirely different category from the rude, humble, faithful adorers like Big Sam and Casey and the boys, and Martie loved one of them.

But Martie was a coquette. It wasn't in a girl of Martie's temperament to be otherwise in a camp with a hundred men in love with her, the only other woman being Martie's mother, and she didn't count when Martie was around. And by degrees that which neither of the men wished, which both of them would fain have avoided, was brought about. There was a dissolution of partnership, a rupture of old associations, a shattering of ancient friendship. As is always the case, where both had loved, they now hated.

I said that they were both good shots with the rifle. That hardly describes their capacities. If the mine had failed, they could have earned a fortune on any vaudeville stage. One of their "stunts"—as the boys called it—was really remarkable. Such was their confidence in each other that when one balanced a little can of whiskey on his head and the other bored a hole through it neatly with his rifle at a distance of sixty yards and upward the spectators hardly knew whether to admire the nerve of the can-holder or that of the marksman the more; although

Casey deprecated the performance on account of the liability of the whiskey to go to waste! They shot equally well, and sometimes the one and sometimes the other held the target. It had grown an old story to Medicine Dog, but strangers always wanted to see the feat performed. After the rupture between them they did it no more, of course.

It was Martie who had separated them and it was Martie who brought them together again. Both men paid assiduous court to her, and she positively refused under any circumstances to give either a final answer until they became friends once more and swore to accept her decision without prejudice to that friendship. Martie was a power, and she had her way.

A reconciliation was effected, and the two men went back to work on their joint claim.

Still, Martie hesitated over that decision. Some intuition told her that no promise would avail against the satisfaction on the one hand and the disappointment on the other when she made a choice; but make it she must, and finally, after much hesitation, she announced that she chose Sanderson. His joy could not quite obliterate in her mind the impression caused by Elliott's grief. Elliott was too much of a man, however, to make any open outcry. He believed that if Sanderson had been out of the way he would have been successful, and his belief was probably correct; but the matter had been decided, and he swallowed his disappointment as best he might and bore Sanderson's triumph in silence.

A sporty stranger came to Medicine Dog one day shortly after the engagement was announced, and the conversation in the saloon turned upon the marksmanship of the camp. Medicine Dog prided itself on the ability of Elliott and Sanderson. The stranger was incredulous, and wagers were made and the boys repaired in a body to the Elliott-Sanderson claim and told of the bets. Neither man was anxious for the test, but for the honor of the camp, and because of the disappointment of the boys themselves, they felt that they could not refuse. Each volunteered to hold the can and each urged the other to shoot. Finally they agreed to decide the matter by tossing a coin,—the usual method of settling mooted points.

Fate appointed Elliott to use the rifle. He seized the weapon and started up the trail to get his distance. In that same moment a grim and ghastly temptation, proportioned in its appeal to the strength of his passion, entered his soul. If he killed Sanderson the field would be free. Martie's affections were not so deeply engaged but that she might be won. The idea whitened his lips and blanched his face and shook his hand, and it occurred at the same moment to Sanderson. He realized, as he walked across the clearing and backed up against a tree, the possibilities of the situation, and his own dark face went as white as that of his companion. But he was game. His emotion was not fear,—at least not fear for himself,—or if it were fear, it was for Elliott. As he prepared to receive the shot he prayed—and he was not a praying man ; nobody much at Medicine Dog was in

the habit of praying then—that Elliott might be equal to resisting the terrible demand.

As for Elliott, his soul was torn in a perfect tempest. He could see nothing but the fact that there before him was the man who had won the object for which he would have given his soul, that the man was unarmed, that if he shot him no power on earth could ever connect him with the crime of murder, for he could swear that it was an accident. The best of marksmen sometimes make blunders; all do not shoot with the continued accuracy of a William Tell. Satan possessed the man's soul for the moment. Ay, it was the woman who had tempted the man,—so it was in the Garden of Eden,—but this time a woman innocent and unwitting. Poor little Martie! She could not help it, after all.

These thoughts crowded the minds of the two men as they took their stations. Elliott faced Sanderson and slowly raised his rifle. By a violent effort he mastered his trembling as he glanced along the polished barrel and drew the exquisite bead upon the little black spot on the can where he was to send the bullet.

There was something in the air, in the attitude of the two men, in the situation, which suddenly broke upon the consciousness of the onlookers. They shifted uneasily. Finally Big Sam burst out, amid a chorus of approval:

"For God's sake, Elliott, don't shoot! You're not in the mood to-day, old man. We'll willin'ly lose the bet. Give the stranger his money, boys."

It was Sanderson who broke the silence.

"What are you afraid of, Sam?" he cried, taking the can in his hands. "By Heaven, the man doesn't live," he shouted, translating everybody's thought in his impetuosity, "that dare charge my partner with foul play!"

"No, no, of course not," came in expostulation from the crowd of spectators.

"That's right, then," said Sanderson, calmly. "Go ahead, Jack. I'll trust you."

He lifted the can again to his head, folded his arms, and faced his friend, a little smile on his lips.

Once more Elliott lifted his gun, which he had dropped during the conversation. This time his nerves were quite steady. He glanced along the barrel again. Should he send a shot into that smiling face?—his friend's face? A moment would determine. He aimed long and carefully at the target he had selected.

The smile would have died away from Sanderson's face had he not fixed it there with a horrible effort. Elliott again so lingered over his aim that the men once more started to interfere. The tense situation was more than they could bear. What was the matter?

Suddenly the devil that had possessed him released the miner. Elliott's love for man passed his love for woman. He forgot Martie as he faced Sanderson. His courage came back to him and his clearness of vision.

He dropped his rifle, and before any one could stop him, although Sanderson screamed, "For God's

sake, Jack, don't do it!" and the men surged toward him, he whipped out his pistol, pointed it at his own breast, pulled the trigger, and fell bleeding from a mortal wound through the right lung.

"Men," he gasped out brokenly, "you're right—I was going to kill—him—on account of—Martie, you know, but—but he trusted me and—I could—not. Yet I'm a murderer—in the—sight of God—and my punishment—is—this. Dick—don't tell Martie."

There was a look of peace on his face as they gathered around him. They drew back a little as Dick Sanderson knelt down and took him in his arms.

"Jack, Jack!" he sobbed, "I knew your temptation, but I knew you wouldn't shoot me, old man. You were braver than I. I don't know what would have happened if the coin had flipped my way. Oh, Jack, I wish to God you had killed me!"

"Now—I'm—forgiven," whispered Elliott, feebly, lifting his hand toward the other, and then he smiled, and then it was all over.

"Gentlemen," said Sanderson, crying like a baby, as he rose to his feet, "he died for me."

"And for Martie," added Casey.

"Yes, and for Martie."

"Stranger," said Big Sam, turning to the man who had made the wager, "the money is yourn. I wish to God we'd never bet!"

"Gentlemen," said the stranger, "I don't take no money from no gents w'ich is won under them circumstances, but if you gents 'll come down to the saloon and likker with me——"

"That's handsome of you, stranger, but we don't none of us git no likker in this camp to-day. That there saloon closes in Medicine Dog until arter the funeral of the finest and whitest-hearted gentleman and the best shot that ever lived in this camp," said Big Sam, turning mournfully away.

With Great Guns and Small

"A thousand glorious actions that might claim
Triumphant laurels, and immortal fame,
Confus'd in crowds of glorious actions lie,
And troops of heroes undistinguished die."

ADDISON

"Who cries that the days of daring are those that are faded far,
That never a light burns planet bright to be hailed as the hero's star?
Let the deeds of the dead be laurelled, the brave of the elder years,
But a song we say, for the men of to-day, who have proved themselves
their peers."

CLINTON SCOLLARD

THE FINAL PROPOSITIONS

A DRAMA OF THE CIVIL WAR

"Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?"

SHAKESPEARE

I.—AT THE TOP OF THE HILL

THERE wasn't a harder body of fighters in the army of the United States than "Kirke's Lambs." The only resemblance between this modern regiment and the famous body of horse which divided dishonors with Jeffreys after Sedgemoor, nearly two hundred years before, was in the name of their commander, for they were held under too iron a rule to degenerate into brutal and ferocious excesses. Besides, Kirke and the generals he served under always gave that body of hard riders plenty to do, so that they found an easy vent for their superfluous energies in legitimate fighting,—if any can be so called.

Kirke had grown up with the regiment from a subaltern to the colonel. Drafts had restored its depleted members from time to time, but in the spring of 1865 the Civil War was about over, and it was not

considered necessary to complete its quota by an infusion of new blood then. There was but a handful of them left, therefore. The others—well, they said the bodies of "Kirke's Lambs" blazed a pathway from the Mississippi to the sea.

Kirke was an iron man everywhere and in everything,—in his business, in his regiment, and in his family, which now consisted of one solitary woman. The single child who had blessed the union had died before the war. The woman had been left alone for over four years. Kirke had never left the front and what he conceived to be his duty. He was a reticent, self-contained, undemonstrative man, whose affection made no show on the surface, though the current of it ran very still and deep. He actually idolized the woman who bore his name and had borne his son. On the death of that son he had made no great display of grief, though it cut him to the heart; and in general he gave little outward evidence of any strong affection to the poor, weak wife left so much alone and pining, like every woman in a like case.

She was a nervous, high-strung little body, utterly unable to see beneath the outward show; not strong enough to fathom Kirke's depths,—her heart was too light a plummet,—and it was a wonder to Jack Broadhead, who was Kirke's dearest friend and the second in command of the "Lambs," how she ever inspired the devotion that he, with better insight, divined that Kirke cherished for her.

Well, what was left of the regiment was out scout-

ing. It had been ordered to clear up the remains of a Carolina brigade of Confederates which had been making things pleasant for the left flank of Sherman's army all the way to the sea and afterwards. One morning in February a party of some two hundred and fifty troopers, all that was left of the "Lambs," galloped over a rough road up a narrow valley toward the base of a buttress-like, tree-clad hill, upon the top of which lay ensconced the remains of that brigade.

They called it a brigade in the Confederate army, but it was really no more of a brigade than were some of Washington's during the Revolution: it was a handful of perhaps one hundred and fifty desperate, half-starved, ragged men, whose rifles and the bronzed, tense look of the hunted veteran at bay alone proclaimed them soldiers. They lay snug behind a hastily improvised breastwork on the crest of the hill. And they had retreated just as far as they intended to go. This was the limit.

Above them from an impromptu tree-trunk staff flapped and fluttered a ragged and tattered Confederate flag,—their last. They might have retreated farther, but to have gone northward would have thrown them into the arms of a division ranging the country, which would mean their annihilation or, if they scattered, their disintegration. Kirke had been pursuing them for a day or two. They knew his detachment, and in a spirit of reckless pugnacity they determined to have one good, square, stand-up fight before they quit the game, which everybody now knew was a

losing one from the Confederate stand-point, with the inevitable end in plain sight. They had fought together during four years; they would fight together once more, let the end be what it would. A dangerous crowd to tackle.

With a skill which should have been manipulating an army, Hoyle, the brigadier-general in command of the remains, had disposed his men so that there was only one practicable way to attack them, and that was straight up the mountain. Their flanks were protected by ravines, and their rear could not be come at save by a détour of many miles over the mountains.

Kirke, halting his men at the foot of the hill, realized the situation as soon as he saw it. Could they take the hill by a direct front attack in the face of such a body of men, desperate old soldiers, who could shoot as straight and as fast as the remnants of that brigade could? Yet what else was there to do? He could not retire; he had been directed to put that brigade out of action, capture, or destroy it. He could not besiege it and starve it out. It was a problem.

While he was hesitating, Jack Broadhead, who had been left behind at head-quarters for a day, came galloping up with a few troopers as his escort. His quick, soldierly eye took in the desperate situation. After the necessary salutes had been exchanged a little conversation took place.

"That is a strong position, Bob."

"It is that, Jack."

"That fellow is a soldier, every inch of him."

"We knew that before."

"Yes. Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"I hardly know. Think we can take it?"

"Well, I don't know. Looks dubious. But we've got a crowd here that will storm hell itself, if somebody leads, you know."

"I'll lead, but this is worse than hell."

"Oh, by the way," Broadhead burst out, as a flash of recollection came to him, "I have a letter for you. It came just as I was leaving head-quarters."

He fumbled in the breast of his jacket, and as Kirke stretched out his hand indifferently he gave him the letter. The man's face changed slightly. A look of softness mitigated the iron aspect of his visage.

"Ah," he said, in a rarely communicative moment, "from my wife."

He tore it open. A glance put him in possession of its contents. Again his face changed. It was hard and grim at best, but never, thought Broadhead, as he watched him, had he exhibited a grimmer and harder look than at this moment. And there was a gleam almost of agony in the man's eyes. His lips trembled,—and for Kirke's lips to tremble was a thing unheard of! Broadhead saw him clench his teeth together and by a mighty effort regain his self-control. During the struggle he had crushed the letter in his hand.

After a minute he unclosed his fingers, smoothed out the paper, took out his pencil, and wrote a brief endorsement upon the bottom of it, signed his name, folded it up, and thrust it in the pocket of his coat.

"If anything happens to me, Broadhead,"—and there was a harsher ring than usual in his voice,—"this letter is to go back—to—to my—the writer."

"Very good," said Broadhead, who knew his superior too well to question him as to what had occurred. "I take it that you have decided to attack?"

"Yes. Men," said Kirke, wheeling his horse and facing the iron veterans who had come to love him as few soldiers were ever loved by their men, "there is that rebel brigade on the top of that hill,—what's left of them. You know what they are. We have tested their mettle in a dozen fights. Now we have to wipe them out. It is probable that a large part of us will be wiped out in the process, but that's no matter. Dismount and tie the horses. We want every man in action. Leave your sabres. We'll depend upon carbines and revolvers. We'll go up and pull that flag off that hill. The trees will cover us till we get near the crest. Halt there, form up, and make a rush for it. Save your fire until you get to the top."

The cheer that came in response was more like the growl of an angry animal. The men instantly followed the example of their leader and dismounted. Their horses were tied to the trees and saplings in the valley, and the men, circling the hill in a long line with Kirke in the centre and well in the lead, followed by Broadhead a short distance after, began to move up the slope through the trees.

It was still as death at the top. There was no sign of life there save the flag which rippled and

fluttered gayly in the breeze. It was a bright, sunny morning. The cool touch of spring in the air made life sweet to all that possessed it. In the grim silence the men clambered up the steep slope and slowly neared the crest. Suddenly there was a puff of white smoke from the little log breastwork on the top. A moment later the crack of a rifle rolled down the hill, and the man nearest Kirke fell on the slope, rolled against a tree, and lay still. He had rashly exposed himself, and he was gone. They were good shots, those Johnnies.

The men as they advanced sought instinctively such cover as they could, skipping from tree to tree. Every once in a while, however, one of them would expose himself in the open, and the exposure was always followed by a shot which more than once caught its mark. The crest was bare of trees, and the command arrived at the edge of the clearing with some loss, and cautiously concentrated, hesitating a moment before breaking out into the open and rushing the hill.

"Now, men," said Kirke, "you see what we have to do. The quicker we do it the better for us. Give me that flag," he added, turning to the color-bearer. "Gibson,"—to his bugler,—"stand by to sound the charge when I give the signal."

There was nothing dramatic about Kirke, it was all a matter of pure business with him; but the men thought they had never seen so splendid a figure as he when he tore off his cap, jerked his revolver from his belt, seized the flag with his left hand, and stepped out in the open.

He nodded his head to the alert Gibson, and the shrill notes of the charge echoed through the hills. Ere it had died away the men heard their colonel say, "Come on!"

It was always Kirke's way to say "Come" rather than "Go."

With a mighty roar they sprang from the shelter of the trees and dashed for the ridge. A terrific volley greeted them. With a crash like thunder, which echoed and re-echoed through the hills, the Confederate fire was poured upon them. Had it not been that most of the men, firing down the hill, overshot the mark, the "Lambs" would have been blown into eternity. As it was, many of them fell, but the rest plunged dauntlessly into the smoke through which the red of the flag could dimly be discerned waving in the advance.

Again the rifles of the brigade cracked out, and this time sent their messengers of death crashing full into the face of Kirke's men. This time the carnage was terrible; there were many dead, but the blood of the living was up: they would have charged a moving express train. They tore recklessly through the smoke toward the top, following the flag.

Before the rifles could be reloaded the "Lambs" were at the breastwork, Kirke still in the lead. To leap the log walls was the work of a moment. The brigade was ready for them. The carbines cracked again and again; there was a grim, ghastly, awful struggle on the top of that hill around the foot of the Confederate flag-staff—then silence.

When the fighting stopped the few "Lambs" who were left leaned panting on their carbines, blood dripping from the gunstocks, surveying the tangled mass of dead and dying. The brigade had been annihilated.

Broadhead sprang to the staff to haul down the flag. He was nonplussed to find that there were no halliards, and that some one had evidently climbed a tree, which had been denuded of its limbs for the purpose, and nailed the flag there. He turned to look for Kirke, when, in the smoke that yet covered the field, he distinctly saw the man lift his revolver, pull its trigger, and blow out his brains.

In the confusion after the little battle, fortunately, no one noticed the action but himself. He was utterly at a loss to fathom the meaning of the suicide, but he quickly resolved that no one should know of it.

They buried the brigade with the dead "Lambs" around the foot of the staff, and Broadhead left the flag flying above them. He might have chopped down the tree and taken it, but it seemed fitting that the men who had defended it should have that last honor. The wind would whip it out in a day or two at best. Taking their wounded, they retraced their steps as they could, thinking that Kirke had been killed in the action, an opinion which Broadhead's report sedulously fostered. Broadhead carefully preserved Kirke's revolver, which he took from his dead hand, the letter, which he found in his breast pocket, his watch and sword, and a lock of his black curly hair.

II.—IN THE ROOM IN THE NIGHT

WHEN the war was over, and they were mustered out soon afterwards, Broadhead hastened to Philadelphia and drove immediately to Kirke's house. It was empty. There was no sign of life about it. As he stopped on the doorstep in the late afternoon, wondering vaguely what had happened and what he should do next, the door of the adjoining house opened and a woman came out, of whom he made inquiry for Mrs. Kirke.

"Mrs. Kirke!" said the woman, in surprise. "And who may you be, may I ask?"

"I am—I was—Colonel Kirke's dearest friend."

"Is Colonel Kirke dead?"

"Yes."

"And a good thing, too," said the woman.

"Madam," cried Broadhead, indignantly, "do you realize what you say?"

"Certainly I do. Don't you know about Mrs. Kirke?"

"No. Is she dead?"

"It would be better if she were," she answered. "She ran away two months ago with a man named Allen, and after she left she sent me a letter enclosing the key of her house and requesting that I give it to Colonel Kirke when he returned from the war. So long as he is gone, I guess you might as well have it. Wait; I'll fetch it."

The woman turned back into the house as she spoke. This, thought Broadhead, sadly, was the ex-

planation of it all. That letter. He had never examined it. He had held it sacred, but now he felt that he must open it. It might give him some clew as to the whereabouts of the woman. Yet he hesitated.

When the woman gave him the key he entered the lonely house. He went upstairs and sat down in Kirke's study, and there, overcoming his hesitation, he read the letter. It was the letter of a weak, hysterical woman, reproaching her husband for his lack of love, his seeming neglect, for her loneliness, and ended by saying that she had gone off with a man who loved her, and that he should never see her again. Kirke's endorsement was brief and as terse as the man's character.

"I have been to blame," he had written. "I did love you. I do. God only knows how much. I hope you may be happy. We are about to attack a strong position. I feel sure that after it is over I shall trouble you no more. You can marry the man—damn him !—and be happy."

How characteristic that was, thought Jack Broadhead, as he read,—that last touch ! He cursed the man yet spared the woman. For a long time Broadhead sat there in that house, thinking, thinking, thinking. He wondered if he were the only mourner for poor Kirke. The twilight and then the darkness came stealing over the town, and still he sat there. By and by he heard a step—a hesitant, faltering step —in the hallway. He remembered now that he had left the street door open. He sat still and listened. The step mounted the stairs. It came along the

short hall and stopped at the entrance of the library. He sat by the open window. The wandering figure was that of a woman. She saw the soldier silhouetted in the darkness against the light from the street lamp outside.

"Robert! Robert!" she cried. "You have come back! Thank God!"

Broadhead rose to his feet.

"No," he said, quietly, "it is not Colonel Kirke."

"Mr. Broadhead!" exclaimed the woman.

"Yes, Mrs.—Mrs.—er—Allen, is it not?"

"No, no!" she shrieked, shrinking back. "My—my husband?"

"Do you mean Colonel Kirke?"

"Yes. I have no other."

"And Allen?"

"He has cast me off, turned me away."

"Haven't you heard?"

"I have heard nothing. I have been blind—in hell—since——"

"Yes, I know."

"But Robert?"

"He is dead."

The woman sank into a chair, shuddering.

"When? How? Did he get my letter?"

"Yes. He was killed at the capture of a little hill in North Carolina on the day he received your letter. Here it is."

"Did he say anything before——"

"There is a message written in it."

"Give it me."

Striking a light at the gas-bracket, Broadhead handed her the letter. She read it through dry-eyed while he watched her. She had been a pretty, sweet, dainty, attractive-looking little woman, now she was a haggard, broken wreck.

"And he was killed by the enemy?" she asked at last.

"Madam," said Broadhead, sternly, "you shall hear the truth. He shot himself on the top of the hill the day of the battle with this revolver," laying the weapon on the table. "Here is his sword and his watch and a lock of his hair. I suppose you don't care for them."

"I care for everything that belonged to him more than Heaven itself."

"You are free now," said Broadhead; "you can marry your—your—friend."

"Never! He has driven me away, cast me off, and I hate him! I hated him from the very moment —I shall be free, anyway. He said nothing before he died?"

"Nothing."

"And this is all you can tell me?"

"All."

"Will you leave me now?"

"What? Alone in this empty house?"

"It's my house, isn't it? I am still Mrs. Kirke, am I not?"

"Yes, of course, but—I——"

"Will you go, please? You have discharged your errand. You have told me the dreadful truth. For God's sake, leave me!"

"May I not do something——"

"Nothing,—nothing. You may come back to-morrow morning and advise what to do. I am alone now, you see."

Broadhead stood uncertainly before her.

"Go, go!" she pleaded. "Don't you see that I wish to be alone for a little? You have been very good to me. I thank you."

She hesitatingly put out her hand to him.

"Won't you shake hands with me?" she pleaded. "I did very wrong. I fell very low. But I am very sorry."

Upon an impulse for which he rejoiced ever after, Broadhead clasped the thin, tiny hand in his own, held it a moment, bent low over it, and, with old-fashioned gallantry, kissed it,—that soiled, wasted hand!

"I forgive you," he said, and the voice of the dead seemed to speak to the woman through his lips.

He turned and left her alone,—alone in the darkness, alone with her memories, alone with her sorrow, alone with her repentance, alone with the weapon.

She lifted the heavy revolver with trembling hand. There was a single cartridge left in the chamber.

The next morning, in great anxiety, Broadhead came back to the house. He found the woman sitting quite white and still where he had left her, and the revolver was empty!

THE CAPTAIN OF H. B. M. SHIP DIAMOND ROCK

THE TALE OF A STRANGE SHIP OFF MARTINIQUE

"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

SCOTT

I.—THE CONDITION

"I AM a passed midshipman now, Dorothy dear, and I'm certain to get my swab——"

"Swab, Mr. Maurice?" interrupted the young lady, archly.

"Yes, my epaulet—a lieutenant's commission—this year; you know what I mean, Miss Venour. And, oh, I do love you so! With my pay and what father will allow me and what your grandfather will allow you we can get along,—that is, if you love me well enough to try it."

There was a long pause. The young lady looked down at her feet, while the arm of the young man stole around her waist. Tired at last of waiting, though the position was a charming one, the young officer recalled her to herself by a slight squeeze, which was answered by a delightful little shriek from the girl.

"What was it you were saying?" she asked, hurriedly drawing away.

"I was telling you that I loved you," he answered with dignity, releasing her, "and asking you to marry me when I got to be a lieutenant, if you love me. You do, don't you, Dorothy?" abandoning his stateliness and bending toward her entreatingly.

"Ye—es, I—I—I think so, Mr. Maurice—James, then," she continued, in compliance with a deprecatory wave of his hand, "or Jim—or—" she hesitated a moment and added the word "dear."

His face brightened. He sprang toward her in boyish delight; but she checked his rush with a pretty little motion, and continued, calmly,—

"You are a very nice boy indeed, but you are so young, you know——"

"Young!" he replied; "I am nineteen, and you are only seventeen yourself! You are scarcely old enough to be married."

"I am," she said, promptly; "I am old enough for anything."

"Old enough for me, Dot? Say, 'Yes!' You know I'm sure to come out a lieutenant from this cruise, and then you will be a year older, too, you know, and—oh, Dot, do take me! You'd better take me now, you know; you might not have a chance next year. I've been wounded once, and something tells me——"

He paused gloomily.

"Oh, Jim," she cried, "don't speak of it! But grandfather will never consent. You know perfectly

well a lieutenant's pay does not amount to anything, and——"

"You are right there, Dot," broke in a deep voice, as a stout, red-faced old man in the uniform of a captain in the navy came strolling out upon the beach from behind a clump of rocks.

"Captain Venour!" exclaimed the young officer, starting back in dismay.

"Oh, grandfather, you have been listening! How shocking!" cried Dorothy.

"Listening!" snorted the old man, contemptuously, with a nice mixture of metaphors; "why, this young calf here has been roaring out his love like the bulls of Bashan."

"Sir—sir!" exclaimed Maurice, flushing painfully, "I love your granddaughter——"

"Stale news, lad. Everybody within half a mile of this knows it now," said the old man. "Why, the smack of your——"

"Grandfather!" interrupted Dorothy, promptly, emulating her lover's blush.

"And I want to marry her, sir, with your permission."

"Marry her!" shouted Captain Venour. "On the pay of a midshipman! You young——"

"I'm a passed midshipman now, sir," interrupted Maurice, "and I'm sure to be a lieutenant when I come back from this cruise to the West Indies,—and she says she loves me and that she will wait; didn't you, Dot?"

"Miss Venour, sir!" roared the old man, "in my

presence! Did you make any foolish promises to this young man, Dorothy?"

"I—ye—es, sir; I said I—I'd—I'd wait," answered Dorothy, reluctantly.

"Yes? Well, you will; you'll wait until he gets to be a captain. A man isn't fit to be married until he has had command of a ship and three or four hundred men; he doesn't know how to manage a wife. Look at me! I married when I was a midshipman and—and—I know."

"But, sir, it will be fifteen years before I am a captain! Why, you weren't a captain yourself until you were forty, and I can never hope to equal your record."

"No more you won't," said the old man, somewhat mollified by the adroit compliment.

"Oh, grandfather, not forty years! We couldn't wait until then! Why, I'm only seventeen now, sir, and James—Mr. Maurice—is only nineteen. Please, sir——"

Dorothy dropped on her knees on the sand before him, and at a motion of her hand Maurice did likewise.

"Get up, get up, you young fools!" said the old man; "suppose some one should see us!"

"No, sir," said Dorothy, grasping the skirts of his coat tightly; "not until you modify your terms. You know he loves me, and—and—and I am so sorry for him," she added, ingenuously.

"Well," said the captain, to whom Dorothy was as the apple of his eye, "I'll knock off a little. He

can marry you when he has command of a ship. If he is lucky, he might be made a lieutenant-commandant in five years. Now, up with you!"

The young people struggled to their feet and looked sadly at each other.

"Five years!" ejaculated the midshipman, mournfully.

"It's better than twenty, Jim," said Dorothy, cheerfully. "Can't you wait?"

"Wait! I will wait forever, Dot, I love you so——"

"Waugh!" roared the old captain, "are you going on with these proceedings before my very eyes, at my age? It's indecent! There," he added, turning his back to them and walking away a few steps, at the same time pulling an old silver watch from his pocket, "I'll give you just five minutes; and take my advice, youngster, when you cut out a prize under convoy of a ship-of-the-line, don't make so much noise about it."

"I'll get a command inside of a year, Dot darling, or die in trying," whispered the young man.

"I would rather have you alive without a command than dead with one, Jim," remarked Dorothy through her tears as the old captain came back toward them.

"Now, I take it, you have just about time to make the harbor around yonder point where your ship is waiting for you," he said. "You've said your good-bys, and you've got your answer, so you'd better up anchor and make a run for it. I'll take care Dot keeps her word, and mind you keep yours! Good-

by and good luck to you. If you are half as impudent in the face of the enemy as you have been to me here, you will get the ship in a week."

The young midshipman clasped the proffered hand of the retired old sea-captain, wrung it warmly, looked longingly at Dorothy dissolved in tears on her grandfather's shoulder, and then turned and made his way slowly down the beach toward the town and the harbor.

II.—THE UNDERTAKING

H. B. M's ship-of-the-line *Centaur*, 74, Captain Murray Maxwell, flying the broad pennant of Commodore Samuel Hood, was cruising to and fro off the island of Martinique, in front of Fort Royal Bay, to blockade the port and capture in- and outbound vessels. One afternoon in the month of January, 1804, the commodore and the captain were standing at the break of the poop discussing a problem. They had just been in chase of a fast-sailing French frigate, which had escaped them by boldly running under the lee of Diamond Rock, whither, through ignorance of the channel and want of pilots, they dared not follow. The thing had happened half a dozen times in the past month, and the commodore naturally was exasperated.

The rock itself was a huge mass of naked stone, about a mile in circumference at the base, and towering out of the water to a height of some six hundred feet, in shape resembling a rounded haystack. On the southward side the rock, sloping precipitously down to the water's edge, was absolutely unscalable.

The east and southwestern sides were so broken as to be equally inaccessible, and the breakers, smashing with tremendous force on the western end, made landing difficult or impossible. The officer of the watch that afternoon, who happened to be our quondam midshipman, James Wilkes Maurice, who had, by a series of fortunate accidents and some gallantry as well, been appointed a lieutenant a month since, could not help overhearing the conversation.

"It's too bad!" said the commodore. "The scoundrels get under the lee of that rock every time and make a harbor, and I don't see how we can prevent it unless we get a battery of heavy guns up on the rock; but there appears to be no way up."

"If you please, sir," said Maurice, turning about and saluting in great trepidation, for the junior lieutenant was a very small man indeed beside the commodore, "there is a way up, sir. When I was a reefer on the *Cerberus* she was cruising around here, and one calm day a party of us received permission to go ashore on that pile of stone, and we managed to reach the top."

"Oho!" exclaimed the commodore, his eyes brightening. "And could you take a gun up?"

"Not the way we went, sir."

"Well, then, I am afraid your experience will not be of service."

"But, sir, if I might make so bold, sir—" continued the junior lieutenant, hesitatingly.

"Heave ahead! Out with it!" said the commodore.

"In calm weather, sir, there is no surf on that point, and it would be quite possible, I should think, to take the *Centaur* in close to the shore, and then with a hawser and a traveller from the main-topmast head we might make shift to land some guns."

"Capital!" exclaimed the commodore. "What do you think of it, Maxwell?"

"It is for you to say, sir," replied the cautious captain. "The weather is fine enough to-day, and we might try it. It will be risking His Majesty's ship, though, sir," he remarked, gravely.

"Fetch me a glass," said Sir Samuel, turning to the midshipman of the watch. When it was brought to him he took a long look at the base of the cliff, observing a little stretch of sandy beach, upon which the breakers usually tumbled with tremendous fury. This morning, fortunately, it seemed calm.

"I will answer, sir, that there is deep water under the cliff," ventured Maurice at this moment.

"Will you answer for the flag-ship, too, sir?" asked the commodore, keenly.

"No, sir, I——"

"I shall have to answer for that myself," he continued. "We'll try it, Captain Maxwell; the wind's off shore, the sea smooth as a mill-pond. We'll anchor the *Centaur* close under the lee of the rock off the west side there. Call away a boat. Let Mr. Maurice go in charge, and I myself will accompany him. We'll examine into the situation."

The investigation under the commodore proved the practicability of the bold scheme proposed by the

young lieutenant. The *Centaur* was anchored close under the lee of the cliff, and with incredible labor five of her big guns—three long twenty-four-pounders and two eighteen-pounders—were landed on the rock. One end of a heavy cable was fastened to the main-topmast and the other was secured to the top of the cliff. Up this by means of a traveller the heavy guns were dragged. One of the twenty-four-pounders had been fitted upon a circular carriage commanding the landing-place, another was mounted on the northeast side, and the third upon a platform about midway up the rock. The two eighteen-pounders were planted on the very summit and commanded an immense distance. When the commodore had decided to undertake the manning of the rock, Maurice had sought an interview with him and explained his reason for aspiring to the command of the landing-party, which would, in the natural course of events, be given to a much older man.

"So your marriage with little Dot Venour depends on your commanding something with a pennant fluttering above, does it? Lord!" roared the commodore, bursting into deep sea laughter, "and you want to hoist your juvenile broad pennant on this rock, and then you'll want to claim all sorts of privileges, you young dog! I didn't think that baby was old enough to be married yet, nor you either. Get along with you! I don't know what my old friend Venour would say if I'd be a party to this mad purpose of yours by giving you the command of this expedition. There, lad, go to your duty; I'll think

about it," added the commodore, exploding with mirth again.

He thought so well about it, however, that when all preparations had been made, to the very great disgust of the older officers of the ship, he detailed Maurice to the command of the party. On account of his lack of rank, his junior officers were all midshipmen. He and the four midshipmen and one hundred and twenty men and boys, including some of the best seamen, composed the landing party, with four months' supply of provisions and ammunition. As the *Centaur* got under way and beat up toward Fort Royal, Maurice tore open an envelope the commodore had handed him when he bade him good-by. It was a commission and orders to command H. B. M's sloop-of-war *Diamond Rock*, five guns and one hundred and twenty men! He almost fell over the precipice in surprise and delight at the situation.

The rock was entirely barren except on the northwest side, where a little depression existed in which there was a group of stunted wild fig-trees. There were two or three caves half-way up to the summit, dry and airy, the floors covered with fine sand, of which the officers chose the smallest, the men another, and all hands made themselves very much at home. The crew was divided into watches, a station bill made out, lookouts appointed, and the regular routine of a man-of-war begun.

They had not long to wait to demonstrate their usefulness. Two days after the departure of the

Centaur the lookout on the top of the rock saw a frigate under a tremendous press of canvas endeavoring to run between the rock and the shore and make for Fort Royal. Far away, and coming along like a gigantic white cloud, was a ship which was presently made out to be the *Centaur*. A drummer-boy, not the least important member of the crew of the *Diamond Rock*, beat to quarters, the men sprang to their stations, and the huge guns were loaded and carefully trained on the unsuspicious French ship. She came booming along at a terrific pace. Maurice, with a coolness remarkable in one so young, waited until she was well in range, and then, taking careful aim, with the long twenty-four half-way up the summit, ignited the priming.

With a terrific roar the ball sped straight to its mark. They were too far away to hear the crash as it struck the fore-topmast, but the fall of the mast and the confusion on the ship were plainly visible. With hearty British cheers the rest of the battery let drive at the oncoming frigate. One of the eighteens carried away the jib-stay and the jib-halliards. There was great consternation on the French frigate. No one had dreamed of an enemy in that quarter, and before they could make up their minds what to do a second broadside was poured upon them from the rock. Clearly the pass was untenable. The captain of the frigate was a good seaman, and he promptly turned about and made for the sea again. He hoped to escape the *Centaur* by his speed, but the old ship-of-the-line had the wind and heels of him now and

she came rushing down upon the frigate. After a long pursuit and a gallant endeavor the French captain found himself under the *Centaur's* guns. There was nothing to do but to surrender. Throwing a prize crew on board, the *Centaur* ran off toward the rock. When near enough to be seen a string of flags fluttered out from the mizzen-topgallant yard-arm, and the delighted youngsters on the rock read the following:

"Well done, Captain Maurice!"

The men on the *Centaur* might have almost heard the cheers with which the men and boys on the rock greeted the signal. It had leaked out somehow that the young lieutenant whom they all loved, and to whose forethought the manning of the rock was due, was in some way fighting for his sweetheart as well as his country, and, above all men, the sailor loves a lover.

Scarcely a week passed without a brush with the enemy, and some months elapsed before the French learned that the passage which they had used with so much skill and success was finally closed to them, and, save at night, no vessels attempted the channel —not many then. There had been plenty of excitement during this period, but now all was changed. The *Centaur* and other ships sailed away, and the crew on the rock had little or no communication with the shore for over a year longer. Their provisions and water were replenished every quarter by a frigate, which was despatched for the purpose. Otherwise they seemed to have been forgotten. The

novelty of the situation had worn off, and the monotony had begun to pall upon them dreadfully. Maurice and his young officers were at their wit's end to find employment for the men and keep them in good spirits. The discipline was, of course, sternly maintained, but, sailor-like, the men tired of the shore and pined for the unsteady deck of a ship; in addition, Maurice longed for Dorothy. He had not been able to send a word, nor had he received a line from that young lady. He was too proud to write to the commodore by one of the provisioning ships, and ask for relief.

One evening about the middle of May, 1805, when the provision-ship was about due on its quarterly trip, the watchers on the rock saw a great fleet of sixteen sail-of-the-line, seven frigates, three corvettes, and a number of smaller vessels, all flying the French flag, running through the channel toward Fort Royal. With joy in their hearts at the opportunity for action, the five guns on the stony sloop-of-war promptly opened fire upon the great French and Spanish fleet of M. de Villeneuve, who was prosecuting his attempt to befool Nelson by giving him that mad chase across the Atlantic and back which ended at Trafalgar.

The French ships returned the fire as they came within range of the rock, and their tremendous broadsides kicked up a deal of noise and cut up the face of the rock somewhat, but did no other damage. The crew of the rock made excellent practice, and, considering their force, rendered the passage interesting to the French. The ennui of the intervening

months was forgotten. Villeneuve was furious. Never before had one lieutenant, four midshipmen, and one hundred-odd men (some of them had died during the sojourn) engaged successfully a splendid fleet of line-of-battle-ships. Toward evening one belated Spanish ship unsuspiciously attempted to anchor near the rock, but she was soon driven off with much loss. The elated Englishmen saw the fleet anchor at Fort Royal, now called, in deference to the republican form of government of France, Fort de France. Villeneuve, who was furiously angry, learned from the French at Fort de France that the formidable barrier was held by a handful of men, so he determined to capture the rock, and for that purpose, on the 29th of May, he detached a squadron consisting of the *Pluton* and *Berwick*, 74's, the frigate *Sirene*, 36, the *Argus*, 16, an armed schooner, and eleven gun-boats under the command of Commodore Cosmao, of the *Pluton*, with four hundred troops-of-the-line.

The rock had been blockaded ever since the arrival of the fleet at Martinique. When Maurice saw the ships bearing down upon him at break of day on the 31st of June, 1805, he knew what to expect. Owing to the fact that the supply-ship, which was due, had not arrived,—because of the blockade, doubtless, and the presence of the great French fleet,—Maurice unfortunately found himself with but a scanty supply of powder and shot. He determined to abandon two of the lower guns and concentrate his force about the eighteen-pounders and the twenty-

four-pounder half-way up. Spiking the lower guns, thus destroying the battery, he withdrew to the summit of his command. For two days the ships were anchored near by, the mild weather permitting them to come close in. During this period the French poured an unremitting hail of shot upon the stone batteries of the rocky vessel. Maurice and his men answered the fire slowly but with great precision from their three remaining guns. Three of the gun-boats and two other small boats were sunk, and the larger ships were much cut up. The young captain might have protracted his defence indefinitely had not his powder entirely failed him. Observing the English fire to slacken, the French finally landed their troops on the beach at the foot of the rock. The last charge of the twenty-four hurled its iron missive of death among the Frenchmen huddled on the beach. Then, like a flock of goats, they sprang at the cliffs and clambered up the steep sides of the rock, which the fire of the ships cleared with showers of grape-shot. A feeble musketry-fire, for the small cartridges had been torn to contribute powder for the great guns, met them, but they came boldly on. As they swarmed over the rock Maurice and some of the older men struck at the advancing French with their swords. The two men nearest him were killed and he himself was badly wounded. There was nothing left but surrender. A French officer hauled down the English flag. The young captain had lost his first command. H. B. M's sloop-of-war *Diamond Rock* had passed into the hands of Admiral Villeneuve.

When the young captain recovered his senses in the cabin of the *Bucentaur*, the flag-ship of the French admiral, bound for Europe again, he did not know whether or not he had won Dorothy Venour.

III.—THE REWARD

EARLY in November, a week or so after the great battle of Trafalgar, which the young captain witnessed from the deck of the French ship, from which in the confusion he escaped to the *Victory*, where he did good service until the close of the action, he was landed at Portsmouth once more. In his pocket he bore two documents, one dated a year and a half back, and the other but yesterday. Led by an instinct which he could not explain, instead of going up to Captain Venour's house on the hill, he made his way through the town and along the beach toward that sheltered little cove from which he had taken his departure two years before. As he turned the point of rocks he saw a lonesome little figure seated on the sand, resting her chin in her hand and looking mournfully out over the sea. It was Dorothy. He stole up behind her, caught her under the arms, lifted her to her feet, and kissed her before she could utter a scream. When she recovered, however, she made up for her startled silence.

"Oh, Jim dear!" she cried, precipitating herself into his arms with a shriek of delight, "you look like a real man now!"

"I am a man, Dot darling," he replied, his eyes

brightening as he saw her radiant face peeping out from the brown curls near his shoulder.

"Well, sir," exclaimed the deep voice of Captain Venour, coming down the beach,—singular how he always happened to be around at inopportune moments,—"you may be a man, but have you a command?"

"Oh, grandfather, he has command of me," cried Dorothy, archly, breaking away from her lover. "Won't I do?"

The old captain whistled.

"I've had command of a ship-of-the-line and I've tried to command one woman, but give me the ship-of-the-line," he answered, reflectively. "No, you won't do."

"Captain Venour," remarked the young man, gravely, "I have had a command, sir, and in accordance with your agreement I have come to claim your granddaughter."

"What was your command, my lad?" asked the captain, facetiously, "a dinghy or a jolly-boat?"

"Neither, sir."

"A cutter, then?"

"No, sir."

"A brig or a sloop-of-war?"

"No, sir."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the captain; "you don't mean to say you have been in charge of a frigate or a ship-of-the-line, a boy like you?"

"No, sir, not quite," said the young man.

"Well, what did you command? Did it have two masts?"

"It didn't have any masts, sir."

"No masts!"

"No, sir; it was a rock."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated the old man, sitting down feebly and staring. "A rock? What do you mean? Are you trifling with me? That is no way to gain the lass."

"Well, sir," answered Maurice, gravely, "here are my orders authorizing me to command His Majesty's sloop-of-war *Diamond Rock*, five guns and one hundred and twenty men. It's a great stone hill off Martinique. I commanded it for one year and six months, at the end of which we beat off M. de Villeneuve's great fleet, and were only captured when our powder gave out, by a heavy squadron which bombarded us for two days. I was wounded——"

"Oh, Jim, wounded!" cried Dorothy, with a shriek of alarm, rushing toward him, while the dazed old man made no movement to prevent her.

"It is nothing, Dot darling," said the young fellow, manfully, but not making the slightest effort to avoid the caress. "I was wounded and taken on board the French flag-ship *Bucentaur*, from which I escaped to the *Victory* at Trafalgar, where Nelson beat the French fleet."

"Hey? What?" cried the old man. "Beat the French? But, of course, we always do that."

"I saw him killed, sir," added young Maurice.

"Who killed?" exclaimed Captain Venour, in astonishment.

"Lord Nelson, sir; right in the height of the battle."

"Good God!" cried Captain Venour. "Nelson gone? He was a reefer under me on the *Hinchinbrook*. It can't be possible!"

"Yes, sir, it is," replied the young captain.

There was a long pause.

"What next, sir?" asked Captain Venour.

"Well, sir, I swung myself on board the *Victory* in the action. Captain Hardy recognized me and gave me a gun division whose lieutenant had been killed, and—and that's all. No, sir; here's a paper from Lord Collingwood, who succeeded to the command after Lord Nelson died, recommending me to be appointed post-captain, and—and—that's all, sir. May I have Dorothy now, sir?"

"You may," answered the captain, feebly, utterly overcome by the astonishing recital. "Any man who has commanded a six-million-ton rock and fought at Trafalgar can have anything he wants,—if Dorothy is willing."

Dorothy signified unmistakably that she was willing.

"Poor Nelson!" continued the old captain. He rose slowly to his feet and turned away again, saying,—

"I will turn my back once more, young people, and mind, do it softly!"

"WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY"

THE FATE OF A COQUETTE OF 1815

"When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy?
What art can wash her guilt away?"

GOLDSMITH

MARIAN FLETCHER was certainly beautiful enough to excuse the jealousy of any man who loved her,—which, by the way, most men who knew her did! She was sufficiently a woman also to realize her own beauty—indeed, did ever daughter of Eve possess a charm of which she lacked knowledge? Even the most absolute *ingénue* is conscious that she is an *ingénue*, and Marian Fletcher was by no means that. And her wit and humor were not the least of her charms. She was gayety personified, light-hearted, healthy and red-cheeked, and joyous—quite a new woman for 1815, in fact; and that, too, in an artificial age in which languor and pallor, megrims and vapors were the fashion, "Nice customs curt'sy to"—beautiful women, and Marian had a fashion of her own. One word described the sum of her qualities,—fascination!

Even her best friends were forced to admit that she

was a bit of a coquette, however. Indeed, if the truth were told, from the crown of her black hair, which brought to mind the usual simile of the raven's wing, down to her beautiful little feet, she was all of a coquette. She loved liberty, she loved love, she loved lovers. In addition to all of these things it might be said that, in her secret heart, she loved Robert Gardner. Whether she loved him more than she did the other three was a question which she had not settled to her own satisfaction, and about which Gardner himself was fearfully undecided.

She had said—but then she made many perjuries before the laughing Jove. She had permitted him to enjoy the fleeting and most unsatisfying pleasure of pressing his lips upon her brow. He believed that this was a step farther—he would have resented furiously any suggestion to the contrary—than any other suitor had gone. It was. She had allowed him to persuade her into a sort of an engagement, but the tie resulting was about as indefinite as could be imagined. With him—he was a sailor and his similes were nautical—it was a hempen cable which held him to her like a ship to a bower anchor. With her it was a daisy chain, ready to part at the first strain, and the strain was near at hand.

To celebrate the closing of the war of 1812, Colonel Fletcher, an old Revolutionary veteran and the father of the fair Marian, had assembled a house-party at his fine old place on the Hudson. He was a widower with a son and a daughter. The son had been an officer in Scott's army—a major—who had greatly distinguished

himself in the Niagara campaign. Among others who had gladly accepted the veteran colonel's hospitality were two friends o young Major Fletcher, who had been college-mates with him at Harvard. One was Robert Gardner, a young lieutenant in the navy, and the other was John Mason, a young Virginian, who was a captain in the army. The young men had been guests of Colonel Fletcher before the war, and they had known Marian, whom they both loved, for several years. Their wooing, interrupted by the demands of the service, was at once renewed under the favorable circumstances of their meeting. Gardner was a gay, athletic, dashing young sailor,—blue-eyed, curly-haired, sunny in disposition; Mason, on the contrary, was tall and very slender, dignified and quiet, with a temper as dark as his complexion. One was impulsive, bold, impetuous; the other cool and determined, with an undercurrent of sleeping passion in his being; both were in the highest sense gentlemen.

The relations between the two men, at first friendly, had become markedly strained as their courtship proceeded, though no open rupture had yet occurred. Mason could not but be aware of Marian's preference for Gardner; yet, as she had not allowed the latter to announce their engagement, with dogged persistency the Virginian continued to proffer his attentions. Truth to say, these latter were not so unwelcome to the fair Marian as might be imagined. She had entered into a quasi-engagement with Gardner, yet she was by no means averse to the devotion of her

melancholy yet handsome suitor, and her conduct between the two was not altogether above reproach. It was a joyous and delightful game,—also a dangerous!

On the evening in question it seemed that she had gone quite too far, and that even the hempen cable would not stand the strain which tautened it. During the day a pretty little lover's quarrel, which she had wilfully brought about to test her power, had culminated in an open rupture. Laughing at Gardner's pleas, she had devoted herself to Mason,—or had allowed Mason to devote himself to her, rather,—raising that young man to the seventh heaven of delight. She had ridden with him in the afternoon, gone to supper with him at night, and danced with him most of the evening at the party which had been arranged.

Manœuvring her out on the porch toward the close of the evening, Gardner unwisely endeavored to take her to task. Goaded beyond his power of restraint by her flirtation, he assumed an authority over her for which he had no warrant. Where he should have pleaded and entreated, he threatened and commanded. Miss Marian snapped her fingers at him metaphorically—she was too well bred to do such a thing physically. Rendered desperate by her obduracy, his anger passed all bounds and his words followed suit. The mock quarrel on her part became a real one. She repudiated him entirely, broke her engagement flatly, declared frankly that she did not love him,—and in the act of declaration she was convinced that she did,—and with her head high in the

air, a brilliant flush on her cheek, and a sparkle of defiance in her eye, left him. He leaped from the porch and disappeared under the trees; she ran right into the arms of John Mason coming out of the house to seek her.

He saw her agitation, of course, and in her anger she let slip words which gave him a perfect clew to the cause of it. Before she realized what she did, she said that which she would have given worlds to recall —afterwards; then she was too much excited and indignant to care. Gardner had insulted her. She hated him.

"I hate him, too," said Mason, bending his head, his black eyes aflame in the shadow of the porch, "and the depth of my hatred is proportioned by my love for you, Marian. Give me leave, dearest, to make your cause mine."

His voice with its soft Southern tones was very persuasive and thrilling in the moonlight; there was such passion and yet such respect and adoration in its accents. He bent before her so deferentially and so pleadingly. There was such a contrast in his gentleness to the hectoring she had just undergone, that she yielded in spite of herself. With bent head she murmured words—she hardly knew what. Faintly resisting him, he swept her to his breast and pressed a kiss, not upon her forehead, but upon her lips.

At the instant a step on the porch interrupted them. Marian, already repentant, sprang from Mason's encircling arms and turned to see Gardner coming toward them. He had wandered about the

grounds miserably after they had parted and had returned to sue for pardon, but what he had just seen had changed his mind. His face was convulsed with passion. Disregarding Marian, he stepped toward Mason, his hand upraised as if he would strike him down. There was murder in his heart. The girl screamed and then turned and fled in dismay. She had broken her engagement with a man whom she now realized she loved with all her heart, and she had promised herself to a man whom she knew she did not love. She had been bitterly unjust, in her folly, to both men.

The dancing for the evening was already over. The women of the party were retiring to their rooms, and Marian, sick at heart, slipped away and sought her chamber also. Throwing herself dressed upon her bed, she thought it over. Nothing would happen until the morning, she reasoned, and then she would make a clean breast of it to her father. He would extricate her from her difficulties.

Mason on the porch was already master of himself.

"Don't strike me!" he said to Gardner, "or I shall kill you where you stand! Besides, 'tis not necessary. I understand your feelings and I intend to give you satisfaction, but the cause of our quarrel must not be known. The reputation of the woman—I intend to make my wife must not be the subject of public comment. Control yourself, sir, I beg of you," he added, smiling triumphantly, as the other stamped his foot. "Let us repair to the house. The ladies will have retired, and we can easily manufacture

sufficient public cause for a quarrel. I will take it upon myself. Come no nearer!" he said, thrusting his hand into the pocket of his coat as Gardner swayed toward him. "I warn you that I am armed. On my word, I will shoot you like a mad dog! I will submit to nothing from you. I am giving you a chance for your life and affording you every satisfaction as it is."

Gardner controlled himself with a mighty effort.

"You are right," he gasped; "'tis not through fear that I do not strike you, but, as you say, Miss Fletcher's name must not become the subject of gossip. You shall never marry her! I intend to kill you!"

"That's as may be," answered the other; "let us not come to blows about it. I am not used to such. 'Tis vulgar brawling. Control yourself. I take your arm, so. Though 'tis hateful to both of us, we must appear to be on friendly terms."

Arm in arm the two rivals entered the hall and no one dreamed of the deadly hatred which sundered them. After the departure of the women Colonel Fletcher and his guests sat down to spend the rest of the evening—morning rather—between cards and the bottle. Chance, or their own contrivance, made Mason and Gardner partners. Neither of the two partook of the wine. As the heat of Gardner's passion abated, he realized the necessity for acquiring his wonted calmness. He was a famous shot with the pistol, a weapon with which Mason was not so familiar, and he believed that if he had an opportunity he could kill him. He fully intended to do so.

It was an age in which duels were common and life was cheap. Mason was to afford the provocation and give the challenge. He said he would do so and he was a man of his word. Then, as the challenged party, Gardner would have the choice of weapons. As the game proceeded, Mason, who had made several irritating remarks upon his partner's playing, finally remarked, sneeringly:

"That's a cowardly deal, Gardner. Why don't you play more boldly, sir?"

"Cowardly!" cried Gardner, rising.

"That's what I said. But then what could you expect from a man who had been an officer on the *Chesapeake?*"

The allusion, of course, was to the capture of the American frigate *Chesapeake* by the British frigate *Shannon*, which was almost the solitary instance of English naval success in the war, but for which Gardner was in no way responsible.

"By gad, sir!" shouted Gardner, "if I play like a coward, you play like a booby! Your tactics are what one would naturally expect from a soldier whose chief exploit was in leading the flying troops from Bladensburg!" another American defeat and a disgraceful one at that, although Mason had there fought bravely until wounded.

"You shall wipe out this insult, sir!" responded Mason, rising in his turn.

"Yes," said the other, "in the only possible way."

"Gentlemen! Gentlemen!" interrupted some of the others.

"What's this?" exclaimed the colonel, leaving his table and approaching them. "Brawling in my house among my guests? I will have none of it!"

"Sir," cried Gardner, "you are a soldier. You are all soldiers here; I alone am a sailor. This person called me a coward, taunted me with the loss of the *Chesapeake*. By heavens, he shall apologize!"

"What?" said the colonel. "Did you make use of such intemperate language, Captain Mason?"

"I did, sir," responded the other, coolly, "and I may add that he accused me of leading the retreat at Bladensburg, which is a damnable lie, sir! I challenge him instantly!"

"He but anticipates my own desire," said Gardner. "You see, sir, the matter must be arranged. As the challenged party I name pistols, and if the time is agreeable I appoint this moment for the encounter. Major Fletcher will perhaps honor me by acting as my second."

"And Captain Lee," said Mason, turning to one of the others, "will, I am sure, act for me."

"Gentlemen," said the colonel, retiring with the seconds, "cannot this unhappy affair be arranged?"

"It is impossible, sir," replied Lee and his son, who had consulted a moment or two with their respective principals.

"There must be more behind this than appears."

"That's as may be, colonel; there is enough on the surface, anyway; the two men have deliberately insulted each other, and the duel must go on," replied Captain Lee.

"I entirely agree with Lee, father," assented Major Fletcher.

The preliminaries were soon arranged. The party had assembled in the dining-room. The long table was pushed to one side of the room. The colonel's duelling pistols had been loaded under the supervision of the seconds and each contestant had received his weapon. At one side of the apartment the men of the party were gathered; one of them held a lighted candelabrum high in the air to light both men equally. All other lights in the room had been extinguished. Pistol in hand at the table stood Colonel Fletcher. Six paces were measured in the centre of the room by the seconds, and marked off by two playing-cards laid on the floor. Mason and Gardner were placed opposite each other, each one with his right foot touching the card marking his station. It had been agreed between the seconds that the colonel should pronounce the words "one, two," and then "fire!" and that after the word "fire!" the combatants should fire at pleasure.

As is often the case, in the moment of danger Gardner's coolness came back to him. He believed that Marian had permitted herself to be inveigled into an engagement to Mason because of the quarrel and his behavior toward her. He felt confident that she loved him, and he intended to solve the dilemma in which she had placed herself by killing the other man. No feeling of pity, no intention to spare his rival, found even a momentary lodgment in his heart. As he stood thinking hard while the arrangements were being completed, he marked the very spot

where the lace of Mason's coat crossed his heart, into which he intended to send his bullet. The soldier wore his usual uniform, and the frock coat loosely buttoned about his spare form gave him a stouter appearance than his proportions warranted.

It was Gardner's purpose to fire instantly upon the giving of the word, trusting to his quickness of movement and his accuracy of aim to kill his opponent before he had time to pull the trigger. As he looked at Mason standing so cool and so quiet before him, he felt that he would have need of all his skill and address to win the game, in which not only love, but life, were the stakes.

On Mason's part, while his desire to kill his opponent was as great as Gardner's, his tactics were different. Though ordinarily familiar with his weapon and able to give a good account of himself if he had his own time for firing, he knew that he would be at a tremendous disadvantage in a quick exchange of shots. He realized also that with his usual impetuosity Gardner would fire instantly the word was given. He determined, therefore, to submit to the fearful risk of receiving the hasty shot which he felt would come, and if he were then unharmed, deliberately take his time in returning it. He had no suspicion but that the acceptance of his suit had been genuine, and he longed to live with a double intensity on account of the depth of his passion.

All preparations having been made, the colonel took his place. The seconds removed a little distance away from their principals to be out of range.

"One!" said the old soldier, his voice ringing hollow through the apartment

"Are you ready, gentlemen?" said the colonel.

"Ready, sir!" answered both men, promptly.

They both stood slightly turned, their right sides presented, their arms depending, with the cocked pistol in the right hand.

"You know the conditions. I shall count 'one, two,' and then give the word 'fire!'" continued the colonel. "After the order is given you may discharge your weapons at will."

The colonel had a third pistol in hand, for what purpose no one quite understood. The silence was absolutely breathless.

"One!" said the old soldier, his voice ringing hollow through the apartment.

"Two!" he said, more strongly.

"Fire!" he snapped out at last.

Instantly there was a flash of light, a cloud of smoke, a crashing report from Gardner's pistol. Mason's second, closely watching his principal, thought he saw a flick of dust rise from his coat. The Virginian staggered slightly, raised his left arm and laid it across his breast, but still stood erect, his pistol in his half-extended hand.

"Great God!" cried Gardner, hoarsely, as he saw his rival standing before him apparently unharmed. "Have I missed him?"

He put his hand in bewilderment to his head and staggered back from his position.

"Back to the card, sir!" thundered the colonel, cocking and raising his pistol and pointing it directly at Gardner.

"Of course, sir," returned the sailor, dauntlessly, stepping back to the card as he spoke. "I trust no gentleman here will think I shrank from the return bullet. 'Twas but surprise. Take your shot, I beg of you, Captain Mason."

His face was deadly pale, yet he forced a smile to his lips.

"You still have a shot, Captain Mason. Take it. We acquit Lieutenant Gardner of any timidity whatever," said the colonel, lowering his weapon.

Mason, who had grown as white as his rival, deliberately raised his pistol and took long and careful aim. The men in the room gazed breathlessly. They shifted about uneasily. Gardner stood with the smile petrified upon his face. Mason at last pressed the trigger, but the pistol missed fire and there was no discharge. The soldier lowered his arm and recocked his weapon.

"By heavens, it looks like murder!" burst forth one of the men.

"Silence, gentlemen!" shouted the colonel, handling his pistol again; "the man is entitled to his shot, and he shall have it. I'll kill the first man that interferes!"

"I beg him to take it," cried Gardner, with splendid courage, for if ever man could read his death-warrant in another's face, he saw it in the countenance of his antagonist.

Once more Mason raised his pistol. This time nothing prevented the discharge. His deliberate aim had been successful, and Gardner fell dead instantly, the bullet in his heart.

Mason, with the smoking pistol clenched in his hand, and with his left arm still pressed against his heart, walked over to the table and stood by it, leaning heavily upon it as he stared at the little group bending over his dead rival. At that moment the door was flung open and Marian, dressed as she had been at the dance, but with tear-stained face, frightened looks, and dishevelled hair, burst into the room. She happened to face Mason, and, her back being turned to the other end of the room, she did not see the body of Gardner.

"I heard shots," she cried; "have they—where is he?"

"Colonel and gentlemen," said Mason, faintly, coming forward with that left hand still pressed against his breast, "'tis an unseemly moment to announce it, but Miss Fletcher has honored me with a promise of herself to me to-night. We are——"

The girl turned to him with a look of abject horror and repulsion. She screamed faintly. The man was half blind apparently; he did not seem to realize.

"Have no fear for me, Marian dear," he went on, softly, "I am——"

"What have you done?" she shrieked. "Where is Robert Gardner? 'Tis he I love, not you!"

Her eyes instinctively followed the glances of those about her.

"Oh!" she cried. "What is that? Robert! Oh, my God, and I have killed you!"

Her voice rang through the room in such an awful note of agony that every man's heart stood still. The

colonel moved toward her, but her living lover was quicker. He caught her arm.

"Don't touch me!" she cried, shrinking away from him. "There is blood on your hand! His blood! You are a murderer!"

Her bitter words recalled him in a measure to himself.

"No, madam," he answered, smiling faintly, "'Tis my own."

He tore open his coat, showing the bosom of his shirt and waistcoat stained with blood. He had been hit, but the loose coat had deceived his opponent's aim, and the bullet had missed the heart. He had so controlled himself that no one suspected that he was wounded, and he had almost bled to death in the effort.

The woman, the roses all shuddered out of her cheeks, a ghastly picture, stared from the dead to the living with dazed, terrified glances.

"You," continued Mason, swaying as he spoke,—"you have trifled with two honest men, and from your cursed coquetry one lies dead yonder and one—and one—dies—at your feet!"

He suddenly collapsed before her, caught feebly at her white satin skirt with his bloody hands as he lay upon the floor and strove to carry it to his lips.

"He loved you," he murmured, "and I, too—we were fools—for a woman."

That was all.

SAVED BY HER SLIPPER

A ROMANCE OF THE BORDER

"When greater perils men environ,
Then women show a front of iron;
And, gentle in their manner, they
Do bold things in a quiet way."
THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH

I.—IN FORT PATRICK HENRY

THE Indians were out again!

The sharp rattling of a drum frantically beaten rolled through the little hamlet. The silent, pine-clad hills rising above the clearing on the bank sent the echoes clattering back over the river.

Scarcely had the peacefulness of the evening been broken by the first note of the clamor when from every door of hut or cabin the excited people poured out into the clearing and ran toward the stockade.

First came half-grown boys and girls, yelling half in terror, half in sport; then frightened mothers clasping crying babies to their troubled breasts with one hand, and with the other dragging stumbling little children. Then the men of the settlement, coatless, hatless, clad as they were in the various occupations in which they had been engaged at the moment, brought up the rear.

Some of the men endeavored to drive a few bewildered cattle; others helped to bring the younger children; but, whatever his action, each one carried a long, deadly rifle, as with grim, set faces they hurried toward the open gate of the fort on the shore. A panting horse stood by the gate, his drooping head giving evidence of the exhaustion following a desperate ride.

Inside the fort a young man, dressed in the usual fringed hunting-shirt and leggings, eternal garment of the Western pioneer, leaned upon his tall rifle and with eager gestures poured out the details of that message which had started the rolling of the drum.

The Indians were out,—the fierce Wyandotte, the bloody Mingo, the ruthless Shawnee. A huge war-party accompanying a band of British rangers from Detroit had been discovered in the woods early that September morning in 1777. They were marching toward Fort Patrick Henry on the banks of the Ohio, a rude white-oak stockade some sixteen feet high, extending along the river where now the mighty furnaces of Wheeling toss smoke and flame high into the air.

The Indians were yet some distance away; but the messenger, young Hugh McCullough, the bravest, most daring, most gallant young man among the thirty families clustered about the fort, and the one surest to hit his mark with the rifle, could not tell how soon they might be there. But they might appear at any moment; and Colonel Sheppard, the commander, deemed it best to bring all of the settle-

ment people into the fort at once. Hence the sudden alarm and call to arms.

Presently the little enclosure was filled with crying children, boastful boys, frightened girls, serious women, and thoughtful men. The gates were shut; the younger children, under the care of the older women, sent to the safest room in the four corner block-houses, while the matrons set about preparing food, moulding bullets, making cartridges, and lending to the contemplated defence such other assistance as they could. The men and youths fell in with their respective companies and repaired immediately to their several stations, long practice and frequent alarms having made them familiar with the duties expected of them.

A long time they watched that evening, but no plumed, painted, savage figure could be seen through the trees, no sound broke the wonted stillness of the hills. Some of the little band of frontiersmen looked askance at young McCullough. Had he given a false alarm? himself deceived, taken them from their needed labors only to array them against some imaginary peril?

But no; he was the keenest scout and best woodsman in the settlement. A long row of sinister notches on the stock of his rifle marked the red marauders he had sent to their last account. It could not be; yet, if the Indians were coming, why did they not present themselves?

Old Colonel Sheppard and Major Ebenezer Zane, his second, did not hesitate; they trusted the young

man. Requests to return to their homes were refused, the gates were kept closed, and by and by the women and children who could do so disposed themselves for the troubled sleep of an anxious night. There were keen watchers on the walls, but nothing broke the usual stillness.

The morning was dull and gray. Clouds of mist and fog dropped silently from the crest of the hills, sending down long, ghostlike arms writhing through the treetops over the town; still no sign of the enemy.

Smarting under the curious glances and sneers of some of the men, McCullough at last volunteered to go out and reconnoitre. Colonel Sheppard accepted his offer. While some one saddled his magnificent black horse, he broke from the group surrounding him and walked across the parade toward the farthest block-house, a room in which had been allotted to the family of Major Zane.

A tall, striking-looking young woman stood in the door-way. Most of the women in the fort wore linsey-woolsey frocks of the plainest cut, and, while some had Indian moccasins on their feet, the majority were barefoot. This girl was dressed in the fashion of, say, some six months before. There was a touch of brightness and color in her smart frock, albeit a few months of frontier wear had sadly dimmed its gayety. Shining silver buckles overspread her small, daintily shod, arched instep. Her short sleeves, extending only to the elbow, left bare her young brown arms, which had been white when she came to the settle-

ment. The kerchief, crossed over her breast, but open at the neck, afforded a ravishing glimpse of her beautiful throat. Under her fair hair blue eyes sparkled, lighting, in spite of herself, with feeling as she comprehended the manly figure of young McCullough.

He was fluent enough in speech ordinarily; but now he blushed, hesitated, and stumbled awkwardly, as he dragged off his coonskin cap and bowed low before her.

"Good-morning, Mistress Elizabeth," he at length managed to stammer out; "how passed you the night?"

"As well, sir, as one could on a hard floor 'twixt crying children, frightened mothers, and quarrelling lads."

"'Tis not like Philadelphia, mistress?"

"No, indeed. To think that six months gone I was there, a girl in school, and now——"

"Now you are a teacher yourself, Mistress Zane, and we be all learning from you."

"Learning what, pray?"

"The game of hearts."

"Faith, Master McCullough, if rumor belie you not, I think you must have been a past master at that game before I came upon the scene."

"Nay, not so. Dame Rumor does me wrong, but——"

"Well, let it pass, Master McCullough. You brought the alarm, I believe. Was it real? Are there any Indians about?"

"We have not seen any as yet in the valley, but——"

"And was it you, sir, who tramped all night on the block-house over our heads?"

"I did, indeed, watch over—you, but——"

"Could you not have done it more softly, sir, and not add to the confusion the clatter of your feet and the thud of your gunstock? I knew it was you."

"Knew you my step, Mistress Elizabeth?" he queried eagerly, flushing with hope.

"Nay, sir," she answered, coolly; "none other had been so foolish; but the Indians?"

"I go to seek them now and would fain say good-by."

"What!" cried the girl, breathlessly, dropping her mood of airy banter, her face gone white in a moment. "What! you leave the stockade?"

"Ay, Mistress Elizabeth, and I am come to beg you—to wish you—to bid me good-speed."

"Where are you going and why?"

"Up the valley to beat up the red devils; to find them if they be not gone."

"Why, sir, you will be in danger!" cried the girl, piteously, stepping from the door-way and coming nearer to him.

"I am in more danger from your bright eyes than from any Indian that walks."

"A truce to this trifling, sir!"

"Nay, 'tis no trifling. My heart's gone to you. You have known it long since. Is it not so?"

She stopped with downcast head before him.

"They—they did not teach us things—like that—in Philadelphia."

"Nay, 'twas Mother Eve taught you, I'm thinking; and, as I may be—" he hesitated, and then continued softly, "a long time in coming back, I thought I must tell you now or you might never hear it. I love you." He turned away. "That's all."

She sprang toward him and grasped him by the arm.

"Go not," she whispered, her eyes brimming. "Stay." Her head sank forward; she trembled as if she would fall. Unmindful of all others, he slipped his arm around her waist. "Stay," she continued so softly that he could scarce hear her words, though he bent his head eagerly to catch them. "Stay—for me."

"Then you love, too, thank God!" he cried. "Nay, I must go; but I go for you."

II.—THE MAN'S DARING

His horse was ready at the gate now. The place was filled with men; yet, reckless of all who might note, he bent his head low and kissed her unresisting. Then he tore himself away and sprang to the saddle. With a wave of his hand toward the assemblage, a long glance at the girl who stood with clasped hands and white, upturned face staring after him, he struck spur to his horse and dashed out through the gate. They followed him with their gaze for a short distance up the road until he was lost in the trees which covered its winding course.

And so the morning wore on. About noon the watchers saw three or four Indians in the trees. The little band halted out of rifle range on the edge of the clearing, and scanned the deserted settlement and the fort with its starry banner drooping idly from its staff. The mist was heavier now; it was almost a fog.

Two men were ordered to go out the postern gate under cover of the river bank, creep along the shore until they gained the trees, and then endeavor to discover whether or not there were more Indians there. A little party of twelve, under Captain Mason, was assembled near the gate, ready to dash out and attack the Indians in sight if it were deemed advisable. It often happened that such a swift, sharp blow diverted a more serious attack.

Nothing had as yet been heard of McCullough. Elizabeth Zane had passed a morning of agonized apprehension. She was a motherless girl, who lived with her brother, the major; but she had spent most of her life in quiet Quaker Philadelphia at school. Only recently had she come to the frontier; this was her first experience in war—or love.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the sharp crack of a rifle. One of the Indians was seen to fall. The scouts had evidently attacked them. The fire was returned by the group of savages. There was a sharp fusillade in the woodland. Captain Mason and his comrades tore out of the fort and ran toward the sound of the firing. A wave of mist rolled down and shut them in.

The eager watchers on the walls could hear the rattle of the rifles and see the dark shadows cast by the forest shot with flashes of fire. The engagement seemed to be getting heavier. What was happening? They were not able to tell. The fog completely hid from their view the ravine in which the firing was going on.

Presently a man broke out of the mist and ran toward the fort. He was hatless; his gun was gone. He was bleeding from several wounds. His face was ghastly pale.

"Help!" he cried, brokenly. "The Indians are on us, hundreds of 'em!"

As he spoke he pitched forward and fell dead on his face just outside the gate. The fort was filled with excitement. The wife of the man who had just fallen shrieked with anguish, while the other women strove to comfort her and to hush the whimpering of the children.

Colonel Sheppard turned to another officer.

"Captain Ogle," he said, quickly, "take your company of twelve men, deploy them to the edge of the woods, and try to cover the retreat or bring off Mason and his men. Be careful, and do not be ambushed. We are but eleven men left here after you go to defend this post and one hundred women and children."

Again the gates were opened and a little band of determined hunters stole noiselessly toward the clearing. The rifle shots had ceased by this time, but they had been superseded by fierce Indian yells and a

chorus of shrieks and cries from struggling men. Ogle's company stole rapidly forward, but before they could reach the place of conflict they were met by a fire which seemed to come from every direction. Out of the fog and smoke appeared the Indians, tomahawk in hand.

There was a fierce, wild *mêlée* for a moment, and then silence. A sudden breeze blew down the valley, lifting the fog; and the dismayed garrison saw the ground strewn with the bodies of their friends and neighbors, while just out of range the Indians danced, yelling frantically, jumping high into the air, and flourishing gory scalps, which they had wrenched from the heads of the fallen while some of them were yet alive. Four or five desperately wounded men gained the fort under a rattling rifle fire.

As the day cleared the Indians sought cover in the deserted houses on the edge of the woods and opened fire on the stockade. A perfect storm of bullets was hurled upon the fort; but the defenders, well protected, suffered no loss, and, firing slowly and deliberately in return, strove to make every shot tell and with good effect. The Indians could not expose themselves for a moment without being hit.

Presently down the mountain came a party of rangers under the British flag, militia from Canada. With drums beating and fifes squealing they marched up the road, dragging a small cannon, with which they opened an ineffectual fire upon the fort. After a while, however, wearying of this fruitless duel, the assailants withdrew out of range and the roar of the

battle died away, although the investment of the place was still vigorously maintained.

About four o'clock a burst of yells and shouts attracted the attention of the garrison to the top of the hill overlooking the fort. A single horseman suddenly appeared on the brink above the clearing, his tall figure plainly silhouetted against the sky-line. The hill where he overlooked it was some three hundred feet high and almost perpendicular, although the rough slope was broken here and there by drifts and ledges. He reined in his horse abruptly on the very brink and gazed backward.

Elizabeth Zane stood by her brother on the roof of one of the block-houses. With eyes lighted by affection, she knew McCullough instantly. Presently others recognized him also. They could hear the yelling drawing nearer. They saw McCullough look to the right and the left and shake his head; they saw him turn and discharge his rifle at his unseen pursuers.

They realized the situation at once. There was a lost man on the brink of that hill, his gun discharged, weaponless, surrounded by Indians, who were closing in upon him to take him alive and torture him. Death at the stake! There was no salvation for him!

What could he do? Would he dismount and face them? Would he try to ride over them? A moment would tell. Elizabeth closed her eyes, and her anguished lips strove in vain to form the words of a prayer.

"He is going to try the hill!" cried Major Zane, suddenly.

The bold hunter shortened the bridle, backed his

horse away from the hill a few feet, and then launched him into the air. The cry of defiance that he gave as he dropped down the steep slope could have been heard for miles around. Scarcely had he vanished from the crest of the hill when the faces of the Indians appeared over it. The edge of the bluff was instantly ringed with fire.

"He falls!" cried one from the fort.

"He is down!" screamed another.

"No, he makes it!"

"They've hit him!"

"He's reached the ground safe!"

"They've got him!"

"No, he's up again!"

"He's coming here!"

"To the gate! to the gate!"

The bold hunter had actually leaped, scrambled, fallen down that mighty precipice; and horse and man apparently were both unharmed at the bottom. It was a feat of daring horsemanship which has been the pride of the vicinity ever since.

Between him and the fort, however, lay the Indians. Startled and surprised by the hardihood and success of the descent, they stood dazed for a moment. Grasping his rifle by the barrel, with the butt up, McCullough swept down upon them. The first man who laid hand upon the bridle he brained with the rifle-butt. Dropping the rein, he cut at the next with his hunting-knife. The excited horse struck out savagely and beat out the brains of a third. The rest gave back for a moment. He was through!

In another second, bending low over the saddle, he was galloping madly toward the fort. Again the rifles cracked around him. They saw him falter in the saddle, sway uneasily. At the same time his horse gave a great bound forward. They had both been hit, then.

The Indians in their excitement ran after him, forgetting they were within range until the riflemen on the walls sent bullet after bullet straight to the mark. The brave horse staggered and fell outside the gate, pitching the man heavily on his head.

Under cover of the rifle fire, two men ran out of the open gate, and one woman, Elizabeth Zane, followed after. They picked up McCullough and brought him within the stockade and laid him on the ground. The young girl, white-faced, despairing, dropped by his side and took his head in her arms. Her kisses and piteous pleadings seemed to revive him, and a draught of spirits restored him.

"Safe, safe, Elizabeth!" he murmured. "Keep up a good heart, all," he added as soon as he could speak clearly. "Colonel Sheppard, I found the Indians out there."

"I see you did, my boy," said the colonel, smiling grimly. "What then?"

"I rode off to Colonel Swearingen and told him you were beleaguered, sir."

"Yes, and what did he say?"

"He'll raise a force and be with you in the morning. Where are the rest of the men?" he cried, looking around at the little handful of people. "Why

are the women using the rifles?" he went on, noticing that the weakness of the garrison had compelled some of the women to take the places of the dead soldiers. "I'm needed here, I see. I am not hurt," he continued; "let me up!"

"But you are wounded!" cried Elizabeth. "You cannot."

"Nay, 'tis nothing," he exclaimed; "a flesh wound in the arm and a graze along the chest. When the horse fell he threw me so heavily that it stunned me. When my arm is bound up I'll be all right."

"Water here," called the colonel, "and some linen!"

"We have none in the fort, sir," answered Major Zane.

"A woman's petticoat, then."

"Take mine," cried Elizabeth, rising and lifting her outside skirt and tearing a strip off her underskirt.

"Nay, not your city finery, Mistress Elizabeth," protested McCullough, sitting up as well.

"Nothing is too fine for a brave man, sir," she answered, smiling proudly down at him.

"Not even Elizabeth Zane?" he questioned, cunningly.

"Not even Elizabeth Zane," she replied, bravely, in spite of her blushes.

"Thank God!" he whispered, as she bent down and bound up the wound.

"Zane," said the colonel, laughing at the oblivious pair, "did you ever know a peril so deadly that it could prevent two young people from making love?"

The wound, from which he had lost much blood, would have incapacitated a modern man from further fighting; but that little handful could not afford to lose a single member if they hoped to stand off the three hundred savages around the fort, so McCullough took his place on the walls with the rest. For some little time the interchange of fire was kept up, with further loss on the part of the Indians, but none at all to the Americans; but it was evident that some plan was being matured. The rangers were seen manœuvring through the trees; the cannon was dragged to a point where it could do greater execution.

Meanwhile Colonel Sheppard and Major Zane, with McCullough to second their efforts, were looking carefully to their defences. Every rifle, musket, and ancient pistol was brought out, charged, and laid at hand, ready for use. At this moment, however, a startling discovery was made: the powder had all but given out! Without powder they would be helpless to resist the assault which would apparently be delivered in a short time.

III.—THE WOMAN'S HEROISM

As the news spread among the men and the women, a panic filled their hearts. Was that crowded enclosure, filled with women and children, to be delivered to the ruthless passions of those ferocious Indians and the half-breed rangers? God forbid! Yet what was to be done?

"Oh, that we had some powder! I'd give my life

for a keg of it!" exclaimed Colonel Sheppard, in despair. "Has every recess been searched?"

"We ransacked the fort, sir; there is none here," was the reply.

"I know where there is some," suddenly cried Major Zane. "In my cabin yonder there is a small keg of it; enough for us all. I had forgotten it until this moment. I'll go and get it."

The cabin was some sixty yards from the gate, and within easy rifle range of the busy enemy.

"'Tis sure death to venture there," cried the colonel; "besides, you are next in charge here. I cannot let you go."

"Let me go!" cried McCullough.

"Nay, you've done enough, and with your wounded arm you could not carry it. Besides, we need you."

"Let me!"

"I'll go," cried one and another, as the old colonel looked about him in an agony of indecision.

"We need you all; I can't spare a man," he muttered, hoarsely. "I don't see how we can hold the walls against another assault, as it is, with but a dozen able men here. Was ever man in such a position?"

"I will go, colonel," cried a clear voice from the women about the group of men.

"Elizabeth!" exclaimed her brother.

"Mistress Zane!" interrupted McCullough; "nay, you shall not. 'Tis no woman's work! I——"

"Silence, sir!" interrupted the colonel. "Who commands this garrison? 'Tis not woman's work, indeed; but we can spare no men. I cannot risk a

single rifle. The maid shall go, and God bless her! If she falls, why, she but anticipates the fate of the rest of us."

"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!" cried McCullough, appealingly, still unconvinced; "you can't go! Think what your life is to me!"

"No more than yours is to me, Master Hugh," she answered, bravely, "and yet you went."

"Elizabeth, sister," cried Zane, "I can't let you go! You must not take this fearful risk!"

"Nay, gentlemen," interrupted Elizabeth, stoutly, "I will go! Open the gate. Do you cover me with your rifles as best you can. Good-by."

"Stay!" cried McCullough, grasping her by the arm. "Gentlemen, I love her and she loves me. Would you send away my promised wife? Must I see her killed before my eyes? Oh, let me try?"

"Nay, you shall not!" said the girl, kissing him and suddenly thrusting him from her, crying, "Forgive me!"

There was a flash of skirts through the open gate, and she was gone. Forgetful of his wounds, McCullough sprang to the top of the block-house nearest the gate. His own rifle in hand, and sweeping one or two others within reach, in spite of the pain from his injured arm, he knelt on the roof, peering eagerly down the hill.

As she left the block-house Elizabeth ran with the speed of a deer straight to her brother's house. She knew exactly where the powder lay concealed. She felt little fear in the advance. Seeing a woman run-

ning toward them, and ignorant of her purpose, the Indians probably would not attempt to harm her; but when she started back with the heavy keg of powder in her arms they would detect the reason for her movement and open fire upon her at once. Her comparatively slow progress under her burden would make her position exceedingly dangerous then. But that was a chance she realized she would have to take.

It happened just as she had anticipated. She gained the house without molestation and disappeared within the door-way for a moment, though it seemed hours to the men and women who watched from the fort until she appeared with the keg of powder on her shoulder. One glance she cast back toward the Indians standing gazing in startled surprise; one long look she threw toward the fort where, although she could not detect him in her excitement, she knew her lover was on guard, and then she started up the hill.

As she came out from the cover of the house the Indians saw the keg of powder upon her shoulder and at once realized what she was attempting to do. With roars of rage they opened fire. The bullets whistled and sang about her ears; they spattered the earth about her flying feet; one grazed her neck; another tipped her arm; a third glanced off the iron hoop of the keg she carried. If one struck the powder fairly, she would probably be blown to atoms. A new peril!

Her breath came quickly, her heart rose in her throat and seemed to choke her, mists swam before

her eyes as she ran up the hill. Blindly she struggled on. She swayed to and fro over the rough ploughed ground, and the watchers thought she would have fallen or dropped her burden, but something superhuman in her enabled her to hold tight and press on.

She could not tell whether she ran rapidly or not; but her progress seemed slow, fearfully slow. Presently the firing stopped. Three of the Indians, tomahawk in hand, broke from the trees and recklessly started up the hill after her. They would try to capture her. Heedless of a possible rifle fire from the fort as they came within range, they leaped on her trail.

That was McCullough's opportunity. With a prayer in his heart that God might speed the bullet, he took careful aim. The first half-naked painted demon was nearing the girl with every bound. Two more steps and she would be in his grasp. She heard his feet on the ground; his yell rang in her ear. In spite of herself she started aside and looked around.

McCullough had his opening at last. A rifle shot rang out. She heard the scream of the bullet past her head. The savage threw up his hands, groaned horribly, and pitched forward with a bullet in his breast. Encouraged, she ran a few steps farther. Her foot caught in a forked piece of timber. The other pursuing Indians were near her now. The wood was filled with the enemy holding their fire and watching the mad chase.

"Let no one else fire," called McCullough. "You might hit her. Leave them to me."

These two savages, warned by the fate of the first, were wise enough to keep directly behind the fleeing girl. But, as her foot caught, she plunged sideways to extricate herself, leaving the shoe with its glittering silver buckle in the obstruction. That one second was enough for McCullough again. Once more the unerring rifle cracked and the second Indian fell.

Elizabeth, recovering her wits, ran sideways now. The third Indian, attracted by the shining buckle, stooped for a moment to pick it up. McCullough fired a third rifle, which some one put into his hand. The bullet shattered the Indian's arm. With a cry of pain and rage, his other hand dropped down toward the lost slipper, and this time a bullet from a fourth rifle found his heart.

The woods were ringed with fire now, but the girl was saved. When he saw that she had arrived at the fort gate, McCullough ran from the block-house and reached the entrance in time to catch her in his arms. Her poor little Philadelphia finery was red with blood from the wound in her neck, and her sweet young face was covered with the same gory embroidery.

She dropped the powder at the feet of the colonel and fainted in McCullough's arms, his own face scarcely less white than hers. One agonizing glance he gave to assure himself that her wounds were but slight ones, and he had to leave her to the women, for he was called to the walls.

While some of the women revived the girl, others, by Colonel Sheppard's directions, broke open the precious keg of powder and served it to the men.

Those who could do so, took their places, rifle in hand, on the stockade; for the Indians and rangers now came out into the open. Carrying a great log, the Indians dashed recklessly at the fort, endeavoring to batter in the gate, while they kept down the fire of the defenders by the rapidity of their own discharge. They reached the gate and hammered on it with their ram; but the gallant little band within the walls, with their women helpers behind them, poured such a fire upon them that after heavy loss they retreated out of range, disheartened by their failure.

The next morning brought Colonel Swearingen and his militia levies, and at his approach the besiegers gave over the attempt and withdrew. The post was saved with the women and children. Elizabeth and McCullough were the heroes of the occasion.

"How could you do it?" asked Hugh of the girl, as they wandered together by the river that evening.

"I did it for you, dear," she answered.

"No, not only for me, but for the women and children; you thought of them?"

"Oh, yes; but I thought more of you than of the others, all the time. I knew you'd save me, Hugh. I was sure you would not let them take me. 'Twas your rifle——"

"Nay, dearest, 'twas your shoe." He took it fondly from his coat and kissed it. "This little shoe that turned you aside and gave me an opening. God forbid I should ever have to do such shooting again, dearest."

"Amen, Hugh, and yet He guided the bullets, I think."

"Yes, truly. And I never dreamed that you were such a heroine, Elizabeth. Where did you learn it? Not in Philadelphia, I am sure."

"No, Hugh, there is but one school in which they teach those things."

"And that is the school of——"

"Love," she whispered, hiding her head in his breast.

"SONNY BOY'S" DIARY

AN INCIDENT OF THE WAR IN CHINA

"Oh, a strange hand writes for our dear son—O stricken mother's soul!
All swims before her eyes—flashes with black—she catches the main words only;
Sentences broken—'gun-shot wound in the breast, cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital;
At present low, but will soon be better.'"

WALT WHITMAN

AMONG the most devoted of my parishioners was a certain Mrs. Allen,—devoted to the Church, of course, that is; although, if I may judge from her actions, I think she held me personally in high esteem as well. When I became acquainted with her she was a widow with one son. Other children, girls, had been born to her I learned afterward, but she had lost them in their early childhood; and, after the death of her husband, who had been a major in the marine corps of the United States navy, her life had been entirely devoted to this son, in whom her heart was so wrapped up that she fairly worshipped him.

She was a gentle, quiet, retiring little woman, sad-faced and inclined to melancholy when George, her son, was not with her. He was a hearty, healthy lad, abounding in strength and spirits, full of fun and mischief, but never vicious, and he certainly adored her with a genuine enthusiasm. His mother seemed

actually to bask in the sunshine of his presence, and when they were together she was a different woman.

When I first knew them the boy had just been given an appointment at Annapolis; and though he graduated at the head of his class and should naturally have gone into the line of the navy, he had followed the family tradition by electing to serve in the marine corps, as his father and grandfather before him had done. He had risen to the grade of first lieutenant, and was one of the officers of the little band of United States marines who formed the Legation guard in Pekin during the terrible summer of 1900. I well remember the fearful anxiety and yet the superhuman resolution with which Mrs. Allen confronted those days of silence and suspense.

Sadly enough, among the first messages which got through from the besieged ministers was one announcing the death of her son. I was with her, of course, immediately upon the receipt of the news. Her grief was as silent as it was terrible. She made no complaint. The blow just struck her down. Her heart was affected in some way, and Dr. Taylor informed me, and I, in turn, told her that her days were numbered. I felt that it was best that she should know it. Now that her son had been taken, the desire to live left her, and she was almost happy in the thought that a short time—a month or two at most, the doctor said—would unite them again.

A few days after the receipt of the first bad news, freedom of communication having been restored meanwhile, the report of George's death was contra-

dicted. Some one had blundered in the first message, and things were in such a state we could never find out who. He had been desperately wounded, they said, but would recover.

His mother brightened under this encouraging news. There was a faint rally and some improvement in her condition, but nothing of a permanent character. She realized the situation fully, but she summoned all her resolution and determination to her assistance and told me that she could not die until she had seen her son again. Dr. Taylor thought that probably she might survive under the inspiration of her devotion until the boy, about whom we continued to receive favorable reports, should come home again.

So she lingered through the summer, struggling, anxious, hopeful, determined. I happened to be with her on the eventful day when she received his first letter. The joy with which she took it from me and tore it open with her white, feeble, trembling hands was almost painful to witness. I felt as if I were intruding upon a meeting; but her blank look of astonishment changing to regret, and then to bitter disappointment, even anguish, as she mastered its contents was surprising.

"I have lost my boy," she said, with trembling lips, after a while, as she handed me the letter.

"What?" I cried.

"Oh, no; he is getting better and is coming back. I do not mean that; but—but—he is going to be married. Read it yourself."

Why, it was a letter to make any woman's heart proud, I thought, and I said so. There were sober words of thanksgiving to God that his life had been spared; a modest expression of satisfaction in the promotion to a captaincy, which had come to him for his splendid courage during the siege, notably when he led the attack on the sand-bag fort on the wall, where he was wounded; and lots of love for his mother. That was not all, though. He had been a demonstrative boy always, I suppose; he had lavished affectionate endearments upon her, and she had been first in his heart; but now—ah, there was the rub.

I realized, as I reflected on the situation, that I was only a man, and that no man had ever fathomed the subtle depths of a woman's—a mother's—heart. It was as she had said; he was going to be married. I must admit that nine-tenths of the letter was filled with descriptions of the young woman to whom he had plighted his troth. He sang her praises with the blindness of youth and the ardor of manhood.

They had met for the first time during the siege. She had been a belated traveller who had been caught in the Boxer uprising, and had been forced to take shelter in the Legation. She had shown herself to be a heroine, of course. Everybody was heroic in those days. We all expected they would be, and they were. After George had been wounded she had nursed him back to life and won her way into his heart in the process. It was all quite natural, certainly, and very romantic. She was coming back with him. They were to be married by one of the missionaries in the

Legation, where the romance had begun, as soon as he was able to stand it, and he hoped soon to present to his mother a new daughter, who was "the best, the sweetest, the noblest little woman in the world, and whom I love and adore with all my heart," and so on until the end of the letter.

I thought myself that he might have spared her a little of that; and, as I watched Mrs. Allen's face and tried to talk to comfort her, I began to have a dim realization of what a shock it was. That boy had been everything to her, as I said, and she to him. She had always been first in his affection and he in hers. Alone in the world, the two had grown up together. Now that his life was spared, she confronted the fact that she was called upon to share him with another woman.

Oh, the bitterness of jealousy in old age! It was there. Oh, the hopeless feeling that comes over a mother when she realizes that, in a certain sense, she is supplanted! I saw it in the white face, the pressed lips, the trembling hands of the stricken woman leaning back in the chair before me. It matters not that it is the usual course of life; that did not make it easier for her. Other mothers had to bear such things, we both knew, but now it seemed different.

Well, I comforted her as best I could, said all things possible before I left her, but to little purpose, I fear. The next day she was dead. The second shock had been too much for her. I was with her when she passed away. When I came into the room I noticed that the table by her bed was covered with

a pile of common red-backed blank books, which I had never seen before.

"Sonny Boy!"—that's what she called him; in spite of the fact that he was a great big fellow, and as manly as a soldier should be, he was always in her heart what he had been as a child—"Sonny Boy's diary," she whispered to me; "I want you to take them—keep them until he comes home and then give them to him. And I want you to read them, too, so that you may know—and—and—sympathize."

Sympathize with whom? I wondered. With George or with her? Ah, I soon found out. I thought she had gone after the prayers had been said, she lay on the bed so still and quiet. But she opened her eyes presently and whispered brokenly in the silence,—

"Tell him—I love him better than—than—any one in the whole world—will—ever—love him—Sonny—Boy."

After that her eyes remained open until I closed them.

I took the books home, and the evening of the day of the funeral I sat down to read them. It was late at night, or rather early in the morning, when I finished them, and then I did something for which my conscience has troubled me ever since.

I wish that I could tell you all that was in those little worn blank books. Every word of them had been written by her own hand. She began with his birth, the first entry being made as soon as she was able to hold a pen. She chronicled religiously every event that bore even the remotest relation to the boy.

You could see how he grew into her life, how he became a part of it, and, finally, as the years passed by, all of it. There was nothing that he did or said which was not noted. His most trivial actions, his most unimportant words, were all faithfully set down and commented upon. In those books was the history of the development of a human being,—nay, the development of a great passion as well.

As he grew older, and his mother lost successively his father and the two little girls, it was easy to see how the boy became more and more to her. The entries were longer and more connected,—more coherent, I should say. There were whole pages filled with her speculations concerning him. She set down the ambitions she had cherished for his work, the hopes born in her heart for his future, her dreams of his achievements that were to be; she quoted freely from his letters when he was away at school. She inserted photographs of him in all stages of development. She wrote out the prayers she made for his welfare.

The entries abounded with expressions of her ever-growing, absorbing love for him. Yes, and when he had his boyish flirtations and had evidently written to her about charming girls he had met, the jealousy of a mother's heart spoke in her comments. It was quite evident to me as I read on, absorbed in it all, that she would never be able to bear the idea of any one coming between her and that lad. How she rejoiced in his successes and love for her! There were troubles, too,—illnesses, scrapes; but her love

never wavered, and things always seemed to come right in the end.

I could see that the keeping of that diary had become a passion with her. She confessed herself to it as a devotee might to some spiritual adviser. She poured out her heart on those pages which no living eye but mine had ever seen, I verily believe. She was absolutely true; entirely frank. The book was a self-revelation, all unconscious. I could see the ennobling effect of that great passion. She grew greater as I read on and on. A soul was laid bare in the written pages. I seemed to be treading on hallowed ground as I tenderly turned the faded leaves. No one could ever have spoken aloud as she wrote. It's not in nature to do so. It was her secret heart, her most sacred feelings, her inmost soul that lived and vibrated in the silent letters. I seemed to be looking upon things not meant for mortal eyes.

And through it all there was a note of depreciation. Was she, could she, be worthy of him? Oh, the sweetness of the humility of a mother!

But I cannot linger to tell all the story, all I read, all I divined. At last came the entries of the present year. When he had gone away she had sworn she would be brave. He was a soldier, he must do his duty and uphold the honored name of his father; but, oh, the anxiety of it all! I could see that it had almost killed her; yet she had kept up under the dreadful strain until the news of his death came.

I am not ashamed to say that I put the book down and cried like a baby when I read what she had

written. Broken-hearted sentences, bits of prayer, words of Scripture, "Oh, Absalom, my son, my son!" Tears on the pages. The leaves were alive with her words. As I said, they spoke as no human voice could have spoken. They told a tale which humanity could not have revealed. And her heart was broken.

Then came the entry on the day when I had told her she was doomed. The subdued joy with which she heard the news, with which she looked forward to the prospect of a speedy meeting, was quite evident. One phrase struck me on that page:

"The work of years is over; I lay down the pen," she had written. "Sonny Boy"—she never failed to use that title; she clung to it the more tenaciously as he grew older; it seemed very sweet to me—"is gone and I am going, thank God! In death as in life we will be together. 'The book may close over' and be opened no more. He cannot return to me, but I shall go to him. I shall write no more. I have left directions that this story of a life—or two lives, his and mine—shall be burned when I am gone to meet Sonny Boy."

But on the next page the entries began again. She had taken up her wonted life-long task once more when she found that he was living. Curiously enough, while there was joy in the pages now, I seemed to read in them more of regret—in spite of herself. The doom written against her could not be

revoked. Yet the conditions were changed. She had to look forward to a long parting instead of an eternal meeting, and it hurt her. Yet she must live until he came back. I saw it was her will power alone that kept her up. She must see him again before she went out into the dark, or the light rather, to wait for him.

So, in a hand that grew more feeble from day to day, she jotted down her hopes and longings for her son. How much the trembling letters told of her growing weakness ! how different were the characters from the bold, flowing, graceful writing of the beginning !

Finally I came to the entry—the last—on the day she had received the news of his approaching marriage. Oh, the anguish that ran through the written words ! They seemed to gasp out her grief from the page ; sometimes I could scarcely decipher them. I turned back to the entry following the report of his death, and I declare it was no more heart-broken. Another woman had come between them. With unconscious cruelty, in that fatal letter George had told her over and over again how much he loved the woman he was about to marry. She could not get away from it. Innocently enough, he had given her to understand that he loved the girl more than all the world. Thoughtlessly he plunged this dagger into his gentle mother's heart.

I didn't blame him for his feelings. He could not help them ; and, as I said, it was human nature anyway. The experience is common to every mother in

greater or less degree. She had to expect it, or she ought to have done so. Still, I did wish he had not been quite so enthusiastic; not that it would have made much difference, for it was the fact that killed. His mother had intuition enough, she loved him enough to divine the truth through any reticence.

"I can't bear it," I read, "to know that I have no longer the first place, that another woman is nearer to him than I. To feel that the first of his love is given to a stranger! The best of his heart is hers! Who is she? What right had she to come between us? What has she done for him compared to me? Ever since he was first put in my arms, ever since I heard him cry the first time after the awful pain and anguish of deliverance, he has been mine! Mine! Mine! And she has taken him! Oh, God, pity me! I cannot give him up and live! He must not bring her here. I shall never like her! I hate her! I do not believe she is—Oh, how wicked I am! And he will be so happy while I suffer! I'm glad he will be happy—but it kills me. Thank God! it will not be for long. I don't want to see her. Pity me, my Saviour! You had a mother! I am an old, lonely, dying woman. Mercy, mercy! I don't want to see him—either—that I should write it—my son! with a light in his eyes and love in his voice for another woman. I shall die now. Perhaps I may find comfort then. But I shall never forget. He wrote about her on seven pages of his letter, and one was enough for me. Oh, Sonny Boy, to lose you, to—

your little old mother is breaking her heart! Be assured of one thing, my son, I love you and I have loved you better than any one in the whole world will ever love you"—these were the words she had whispered to me on her death-bed—"no matter how much joy you may have, how much happiness, no matter where you may go, whom you may meet, what they may say, no one in this world will ever love you as I have. No one will ever think of you as your mother."

That was all. And I'm afraid it was true.

> "There is none
> In all this cold and hollow world, no fount
> Of deep, strong, deathless love, save that within
> A mother's heart."

I sat there in the gray of the morning with the open book in my hand. She had told me to give the volumes to George when he returned, and I could not—if I desired to do so—disregard her wish; yet to lay before him the sorrow, the regret, the sadness of that last entry: to leave with him that final thought of his mother, to cloud his wedded life with a suspicion which I knew he could never dispel, that his joy had been her death, his marriage had broken her heart—I could not do it! Still, to withhold from that boy the last words of his mother—it did not seem right!

What did I do? you ask. Well, with a horribly guilty feeling, I cut the last leaf containing those terribly piteous words out of the diary. I did it

carefully so that he would never know that anything had been taken away. I felt like a thief all the time, somehow.

I did not destroy the leaf. I could not do so. I put it away carefully with my other treasures, and when George came home with his sweet, beautiful young wife,—and I thanked God he had her to help him bear his unfeigned sorrow at the loss of his mother,—I gave him the diary without the missing leaf; and her last message to him, as I delivered it, was one simply of love and blessing. And I almost felt as if his mother thanked me for it. I hope so.

I take out that missing leaf sometimes when I am alone in my study, and read it over and wonder whether, after all, I did right or not.

Extravaganzas

"'Tis a pleasure to please, and the straw that can tickle us
Is a source of enjoyment, though slightly ridiculous."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

"A careless song with a little nonsense in it now and then does not misbecome a monarch."

Walpole

THE AMAZING YARN OF THE BO'S'N'S MATE

AN ACCOUNT OF AN UNUSUAL PRIZE

"Now this is the tale that was told to me
By a battered and shattered old son of the sea,
To me and my messmate, Silas Green,
When I was a guileless young marine."

ANCIENT SEA SONG

THE second dog-watch, from six to eight in the evening, is the sailor's play-time. Unless some emergency requires it, drills and duties are suspended for the time being and Jackie, except for supper, has his time to himself. The older seamen usually collect on the forecastle ; sometimes in the lee gangway in rough weather. There they sprawl themselves on the deck, or dispose themselves comfortably against the rails or the bitts, or even the anchor-fluke, if every place is occupied, or the boom boats if the waist be the place of assemblage, and smoke their pipes and yarn.

The ordinary seamen, the landsmen, and the ship's boys, if they are not rigorously excluded from the top-gallant forecastle, or from close proximity to the group of worthies who literally "take the deck," are forced to stand afar off, at any rate, where they listen to marvellous recitals as best they can. The midship-

men, however, as a species of privileged intermediaries between officers and men, often make a part of these exclusive circles, especially when yarning is going on.

Among all the tellers of strange tales on the famous United States frigate *Neversink*, Jack Lang, the old bo's'n's mate, held the chief place by general consent, and the sound of his deep voice raised in narration was sure to attract to his side every available reefer not specifically on duty, and all the old shellbacks, to whom yarning and listening to yarns were as the breath of life. And nowhere will you find better listeners than at a dog-watch "gam" on a ship's forecastle. The old man's services on the *Neversink* were invaluable in every way, his word was law forward of the mast as the captain's was on the quarter-deck, and even as a story-teller he was supreme.

One mild, pleasant evening this before-the-mast autocrat and raconteur found himself the centre of an interested group on the forecastle. The midshipmen were burning for a yarn. They had learned, however, that the surest way not to have their desire gratified was to ask a sailor for a story. Certainly this was true of this particular old salt, and it was necessary to approach him by indirection. The conversation turned, as it frequently does in the forecastle, on the quarter-deck, and everywhere else, on woman.

"Wot's the matter with leetle Sammy Bowline?" queried the old man in a pause in the conversation. "I seed him a-weepin' an' a-bellerin' like wot you Yankees call a 'caow' in the fust dog-watch."

"A cow don't weep, Jack," answered a maintop-

man who had been a lumbering bucolic dairyman when the *Neversink* left port six months since, but who was now a smart young light yardman.

"Hev you seen all the cow critters on the yearth, youngster?"

"No, but——"

"Well, some cows weeps, I sez, an' this'n' did," answered the old sailor, sententiously. "Anyway, Sammy Bowline, he bawled awful."

"I reckon he's homesick fer his ma," remarked Billy Clumpblock, the captain of the maintop. "I just guv him a few teches with me colt to take it out'n him, w'ich I've larned that w'alin' is werry good fer homesickness, an' sent him up in the top, as he calls it, to 'spell a watch.'"

"It's a sing'lar thing," continued the old bo's'n's mate, "how much men an' boys thinks of feemales, sech as mothers an' sech like pussons. It stands ter reason thay ain't necessary to nobody's existence, though it's agreed that we all had 'em onct, though I've got no evidence of it in my own case 'ceptin' general report. Look at this ship, now. There ain't a woman on board of her, an' if they was, she'd be considerably disorganized, w'ich I means the ship an' p'raps the feemale too."

"They seems ter be necessary on shore, though," remarked the chief quartermaster, a much-married man.

"P'raps they be. But they're no 'count on sea."

"I've heered them called the weaker sex," said the purser's yeoman, who was fond of literature of the

dime novel variety. "I guess that's becus they can't make sailor-men out'n 'em."

"Wall, naow," drawled the Jack-o'-the-dust, a studious New Englander, given to historic research as he could manage it, "there hev been wimmin sailor-men. I've read abaout 'em. There was two pyrates once an' they was wimmin. An' they was the wust kind of pyrates, too."

"That's nateral," said the autocrat of the forecastle; "it stands ter reason that a woman'd be a bad sailor an' she'd also make a bad pirate."

"They wus good pyrates," continued the down-easter.

"Good pirates? There ain't no sech thing," chimed in another sailor, filling the responsible position of captain of the hold.

"I mean they wus bludthirsty feemale villains, an' they done the pyrate bisness up jest's fine's if they'd a-bin men."

"I had an amazin' experience with wimmin onct," said the old bo's'n's mate, reflectively.

"I should say you had," broke in a young midshipman; "I've heard you speak of your 'ol' woman' hundreds of times, and all the trouble you've caused her."

"I don't mean her, Mr. Bobstay. God rest her soul; she's dead, sir; an', as fer the kids, my darter's married an' the boys is God knows where. I brung 'em up ter be good sailor-men, though, an' wherever they is, I guess they're a-doin' of their dooty. This was another kind of a feemale. You see, lads an' young

gentlemen all, in the Med't'ranean in 1800 I was bo's'n's mate, an', like this yere ship, we didn't kerry no bo's'n on the little hooker *Grampus*, the luckiest barkie that ever carried the American flag. She was schooner rigged w'en I was on her. Then they turned her inter a brig, an' now they're thinkin' o' makin' a full-rigged ship of her. They've done everything they kin to spile her. She's the slowest old tub afloat now, I'm telled, but let anything British take arter her an' she jest naterally takes a bone in her teeth an' rips away. Lordie, to think of that little ship a-doin' all the things she's done! Wall, where was I, mates?"

"You wa'n't now'ere. You was gittin' ready to go som'er's, tho', I guess," said the quartermaster.

"To be sure. Wall, as I was sayin', I was bo's'n's mate, an' that was bein' ekal to bein' bo's'n on that 'ere schooner, an' Commodore Rattlin was jest takin' command of her. My, but he's a sailor an' a fighter! I never seed any one like him an' I have fit in some right good hard battles sence, onless 'twas Commodore Paul Jones, w'en we tuk the *Serrypis* nigh onto forty years ago. I was a smart young foretopman in them days, lads, an' it was me wot the commodore sent out on that main-yard-arm to drop them grenades down the hatchway of the *Serrypis* that blowed her up. So I allus thought that I won a deal of that battle myself, though the commodore got the most credit. Let's see. W'ere was I?"

"You was on the *Grampus* w'ich Commodore Rattlin was takin' command of," said the Jimmy-Legs, lighting his pipe.

"So I was. So I was, tho' he was only a leftenant then, lads," continued the old man. "Wall, we was mighty keen for prize money in them days, an', fer that matter, I ain't never seed the day, so far's I'm consarned, w'en I wasn't ekally desirous of gittin' my share of the same. Now, you youngsters, an' you haymakers,—w'ich is a bit unjest to you, p'r'aps, becus you've larned to be putty fair sailor-men sence we tuk our departure from Boston,—ye know prize money's divided into twenty parts by the laws of the United States. The cap'n he gits three parts; the leftenants an' sailin'-master, they gits two parts; the marine officers, surgeon, purser, bo's'n, gunner, carpenter, master's mates, an' chaplain, they gits two; three parts goes to the steerage an' chief petty officers, the other petty officers gits three, an' the balance of the crew gits seven."

"Seems to me the crew don't git no fair share," interrupted one of the new hands.

"We're lucky to git anything at all," commented the old sea philosopher. "They used to say you throwed the prize money at a ladder. Wot went through was diwided betwixt the cap'n an' th' officers an' petty officers, the cap'n takin' the biggest share. Wot stuck to the rounds was fer the crew. An' if they hadn't tarred the rounds in sum instances I knows of," he went on, mendaciously, "they wouldn't a-got none. Howsomever, this yere explanation is necessary fer to understand this yarn."

"I'd like to know wot prize money's got to do with wimmin," remarked Billy Clumpblock.

"My lad," said the bo's'n's mate, sapiently, "prize money's got a lot to do with wimmin, as you'll find out, especially if you go ashore with a pocketful of it. It had suthin' to do with the wimmin I'm goin' to tell ye of, anyway. One pleasant day in December, 1803, we was a ratchin' to an' fro in the Med't'ranean on the *Grampus* a-lookin' out fer Algerian cruisers, w'en we run acrost a ketch."

"What's a ketch, Jack?" asked one midshipman.

"Well, a ketch—an' the rest on you pay attention, too; if ye just take notice to wotever I says, ye lubbers, you'll soon know a heap about the sea an' other things. Bein' a silent man myself, I don't say much, as ye may hev noticed; therefur, w'en I do say suthin' it's wal'able. A ketch is a wessel wot has one big mast set well aft about midships an' a little one way aft of the fust one. This is to leave a cl'ar space forrard fer a bum [bomb]. They're mostly used fer that, w'ich is w'y they are called bum ketches, ye know. This one, however, had a cargo more dangerous an' onsettlin' than bums would ha' been, fer w'en we ranged alongside an' throwed a shot over her, you never heered sech a screechin' an' yellin' in all yer life.

"'Good Lord!' said Cap'n Rattlin out loud, w'ich as he was young an' impulsive like an' not used to controllin' his feelin's like me, he jest spoke right out. 'Good Lord!' he sez, 'wot hev we run inter?'

"'It 'pears to me,' spoke up Mr. Parbuckle, actin' as his first luff, w'ich he was only a midshipman an' had no experience wotever with the feemale sex,—but I've allus noticed that it's them as has little experience

as knows the most, specially 'bout wimmin,—'it 'pears to me,' he sez, 'that them's wimmin.'

"'Wimmin?' roars the cap'n. 'Wot are they a-doin' there? Well,' he sez, 'we'll soon find out,' sez he. With that he shoved the schooner in clus to the ketch an' hailed her. Of course, the conwersation bein' carried on in lingo Franco, w'ich I understands, it was all werry clear to me, an' I told the rest of the fok's'l wot was happ'nin'.

"'Ahoy!' the cap'n cried, 'wot ship is that?' An' then a measly old Turk he come over to the side an' throwed his flag in the water an' waved his arms an' bowed to the deck, but didn't say nuthin'. He was so skeered he was most frightened out of his baggy britches. He could see the smokin' matches, an' we was jest itchin' to turn our guns loose on the old heathen, with his wildcats, or wotever they was. The cap'n bein' young an' impetuous like, he hails ag'in. He sez,—

"'W'y don't you answer me?' he sez. 'Ain't ye got no tongue?' he sez. 'Don't you hear me? W'ere are you from? W'ere are you bound? Wot hev ye got on board? If ye don't speak up I'll turn a broadside on ye.'

"With that that old Turk he unstoppered his jaw tackle an' reels off an extr'ordin'ry lot o' stuff, but we makes out, me an' the cap'n does, that he was from Tripoli three days out. That his ketch's name was the *Stamico*, or sum sech other outlandish name, an' that she was loaded with feemale slaves fer the Sultan of Turkeys.

"Gosh-o'-mighty, if the cap'n hadn't insisted all the time on the most sharpest dissypline on that there leetle ship, I'd a yelled an' laughed outrajus, an' the men would hev busted inter cheers. As it was, I didn't dare to tell the crew all that bit of news; I jest guv 'em a leetle to keep 'em goin' an' hove to under the lee of the foremast where nobody seed me an' cut loose a few steps myself.

"'This is a putty how-de-do,' sez Cap'n Rattlin.

"'Wot'll we do, sir?' axes Mr. Parbuckle. 'Wot'll we do with them feemale slaves? I reckon we'll have to bring 'em aboard here, fer we can't let the ketch go,' sez that youngster.

"He was as excited as any of us, an' I reckon the cap'n was hisself, if the truth was to be told. Sech a prize as that ain't picked up every day at sea, ye know, shipmates.

"'You know old Commodore Ringtailboom,' contínoos Mr. Parbuckle, grave-like; 'you know, sir, he wants a boat jest like this ketch for inshore work.'

"'You're right, sir, sez Rattlin, werry solemn; 'take a boat, Mr. Parbuckle, an' go over there an' tell that beastly Turk we'll have to transship his cargo over here aboard the *Grampus*.'

"I was cox'n of that boat, young gentlemen, an' we went off armed to the teeth, not so much fer fear of the Turks, but on account of them feemales. You see, we didn't know wot'd happen to us with a ketch load of wimmin folk, an' we went prepared fer the wust. Wall, may I be jiggle-toggled, shipmates, but sech a screechin' an' yellin' you never heered w'en

we got aboard. Bein' a chief petty officer an' the next in command, as it was, an' the most experienced, bein' a married man, Mr. Parbuckle, he tells me to go below an' see wot I could make out of the lot, w'ile he speaks to the beastly Turkey cap'n. Fer a reefer, young gentlemen," said the old sailor, "he was the bashfullest feller I ever seed. 'Tis a rare and onsettlin' quality in the class,—meanin' no offence," he added, amid a general laugh, in which the midshipmen heartily joined. "I didn't want nuthin' better'n that job, so I jumped below to tackle it, took off my hat, an' sez, most pleasant like, 'Ladies, yer most obejient an' 'umble sarvant.'

"They all run forrard at that an' crowded inter the eyes of the ship to git away from me. I suppose I must ha' looked mighty fierce, wot with cutlass an' pistol an' the pigtail we allus wore them days, an' w'en I tried to tell 'em that I come peaceable like, they was makin' sech a noise that they didn't seem to pay no 'tention to wot I said. I thought the best way to ca'm 'em an' to assure 'em of my peaceful intentions was—well—er—I jest caught the nearest one by the arm, slipped my own arm 'bout her waist, an'—an'—smacked her good!"

"Oh, Jack, you old sinner!" yelled the youngsters in chorus.

"Dooty, gentlemen; a true sailor-man is allus ready to sakerfice hisself fer his country, an' I done it cheerful then, bein' as 'twas in the line of dooty."

"I guess you did," said Midshipman Cringle, sagely.

"Thankee, sir," continued the bo's'n's mate, oblivious to the sarcasm. "She yelled sum at fust, but she seemed to like it. Of course, I repeats, it was all one to me, jest in the line of duty, as I sez, though I hev done more disagreeable jobs than that. I jest patted her on the head a bit w'en I got hold of her, an' told her to ca'm down, that we wa'n't goin' to hurt her, an' she seemed to feel summat assured, but, as we arterwards larned, she didn't understand a word I was a-sayin'! Howsomever, suthin' satisfied her. Perhaps 'twas my actions. Well, now, you youngsters, you must remember that I was younger then than I am now, an' there wa'n't a likelier sailor-man on the sea, ef I do say so myself. The rest of the cargo stopped makin' that infernal noise w'en they seed wot was happ'nin', an'——"

"Jack!" said Midshipman Futtocks, severely, "and you an old man! I'm ashamed of you!"

"Mr. Futtocks," said the old sailor, "as I hev said, it was strictly in the line of dooty, an' I was a young man at that time, sir. Mr. Parbuckle, he ordered me to pacify 'em, an' I was a-doin' the best I could. I was only a poor ignorant sailor-man in them days, an' couldn't be blamed fer a thing like that. W'ich I've got more experience now, tho' I don't say I wouldn't be willin' to sakerfice my feelin's to my dooty again if 'twas demanded of me. Well, I got 'em quiet by this means, anyway, w'ich I'm sorry to say you blames me fer, but w'ich my conscience is clear, an' I wish I could do it ag'in, an' I got 'em up on deck, too.

"'How did you get 'em quiet, Jack?' axed Mr. Parbuckle, who was busy arrangin' with the measly old Turkey w'en he seed me a leadin' 'em from below.

"'Well, sir,' sez I, 'I jest hauled alongside the nearest one, hove to, laid her aboard, an' s'luted her with a few light guns, an' the rest stopped a-yellin' at onct.'

"'Gad, man!' said the youngster, 'you've a genius fer dealin' with wimmin.' W'ich I tuk as a compliment, altho' comin' from one with no experience. Anyway, we got 'em aboard the *Grampus* all right arter aw'ile, an' ranged 'em on the quarter-deck. We didn't lose a solitary one, tho' they did beller an' bawl wuss'n Sammy Bowline at gittin' into the cutter. Mr. Parbuckle he was left in command of the prize, an' he a-protestin' bitterly; but the cap'n he sez he might send some of the prize over arter aw'ile to keep him company, but fer the present they must be mustered on the *Grampus*. Wall, we claimed that they all must be diwided up accordin' to law, bein' a lawful prize, an' we wasn't goin' to wait fer no prize court, nuther. The cap'n, bein' only a boy, he was in fer a lark like the rest on us, so he mustered the crew an' he made a speech.

"'Men,' he sez, 'as you knows, the prize laws of the United States diwides the prizes inter twenty parts. There ain't no money, but there are one hundred an' twenty feemale wimmin in this lot w'ich we've tuk. That's six wimmin to a part. I gits three, an' I'll make my ch'ice now. Ladies, yer most obejient,'

"The cap'n he chose fer Mr. Parbuckle, . . . an' a mad young officer he was, too!"

he sez, grinnin' at 'em, an' them a-grinnin' back, becus, like me, he was young an' well favored them days, an' the feemales was havin' great larks, too. Then he steps forrard and picks out eighteen of the youngest and purtiest. Among 'em was the one I endeavored to impress myself on the ketch, an' as she passed me she made languishin' eyes at me; but she had to go with the rest, me bein' only a bo's'n's mate. So the cap'n he ranged his eighteen aft on deck, then the leftenants tuk their turn, an' the cap'n he chose fer Mr. Parbuckle, w'ich he was on the prize an' couldn't choose hisself, an' a mad young officer he was, too, seein' plain wot was a-goin' on an' him not there. Wall, arter the cap'n, the leftenants, an' the chief petty officers tuk their share, blast my eyes if there wa'n't left an assortment of the ugliest old wrecks you ever seed—forty-two of 'em—for the crew, an' them jest beginnin' to understand the game, too," said Jack, laughing, "fer they showed the greatest willin'ness to be tuk. An' sum of 'em must ha' been old enough fer grandmothers, too.

"We carried about eighty of a crew, w'ich meant there wa'n't enough to go round. There was an awful lot of protestin' from the crew on the *Grampus* over this yere diwidin' business. They said it wa'n't no fair. But the cap'n, he sez, it was accordin' to law, an' we was lucky to get what was there, an' to hurry an' pick 'em out. So we turned to, an' then sech a screamin' you never seed! Each woman had two men a-holdin' each arm an' claimin' of 'em, an' we was a-pullin' an' a-haulin' an' a-laughin' all over the decks.

"I tell ye, messmates, a shipload of feemales is the most disorganizin' body that kin board a ship-o'-war. Ef the old *Confederation*, the flag-ship, hadn't a-hove in sight jest then, I don't know wot'd a-happened. We was so okerpied in this diwidin' bisness that nobody was a-watchin' out fer her. We was a-scramblin' an' a-dancin' an' a-raisin' Ned, an' the cap'n was a-protestin' an' a-tryin' to restore order, w'en the old frigate shoved alongside, an' Commodore Ringtailboom was that rageful he could hardly speak w'en he sees us all. He settled the hull thing by takin' all them feemales on board his own ship an' then sendin' 'em to Algiers an' settin' 'em free till the Turkeys got a hold of 'em ag'in, w'ich we never seed 'em ag'in. Cap'n Rattlin he got transferred to the frigate to onct fer punishment, an' we was scattered among the fleet, cos they said 'twarn't safe to leave sech a crowd together no more.

"Shipmates, we was only jokin' about diwidin' of 'em, but arter the commodore crossed our course we was the maddest lot of officers an' men you ever seed, but that was all there was to it. You can be sure that nobody never got athwart the hawse of Commodore Ringtailboom deliberate; he was a peppery old gent, sure, an' 'twas as much as a man's life was worth to go agin him.

"Now, that's an example of how disorganisin' wimmin 'ud be on board a ship."

"Jack," said little Futtocks, amid the laughter with which this amazing story was greeted, "do you mean to tell me that this is a true yarn?"

"Hev I brung you up, Master Futtocks, to doubt me?" asked the old man, his twinkling eyes belying the resentment in his voice.

"I am not doubting you, Jack. I'm just asking you a question."

"Wall, wall, I'll tell ye wot to do. The next time you see Commodore Rattlin you jest ask him wot was done with them feemale slaves we captured in the *Stamico* w'en we was together in the old *Grampus* in the Med't'ranean in 1803."

"But, Jack——"

"Eight bells, sir," said the old man, rising as the four couplets proclaimed the hour. "All the starboard watch!" he cried, shrilling his pipe as a sign that the play-time was over.

THE DISEMBODIED SPIRIT

THE STORY OF A WANDERING SENSATION

"I loaf and invite thee, my soul,
Leave thy fetters of flesh and be free;
Soar abroad, scorning earthly control,
On a sort of a spiritual spree."

TIMOTHY BLAKE

COMMON sense—hard, practical common sense—is a great and important factor in this world's concerns. I am not a common-sense person myself,—though Geraldine will tell you that I am a man of uncommon sense,—but it is to common-sense people that I address myself; people who say, if they ever so far forget themselves as to read "Rappaccini's Daughter," for instance, or that other story by the gifted son of his gifted father, which hides its weird fascination under the name of "Archibald Malmaison," and you ask them if they like the stories: "Oh, of course not; I never heard of such improbable things. Why, how is it possible for a man?" etc. It is to these people I write.

I live in the enterprising Western city of Kalamalant. As my family and Geraldine's family have lived there many years, we are all well known, and any of my neighbors, among whom are a judge of the District Court, a retired major-general of the army, a United

States Senator, and other persons of undoubted veracity, can affirm the truth of the strange incidents of which I am the principal subject. Geraldine will say that this is not the only case in which I am the principal subject, royally assuming for the once—but I digress. Geraldine says I always take too much time in getting at the point of the story, and as Geraldine is the only critic of whom I am afraid, here goes.

I, James Henry Rettew, commonly called Harry, was about twenty-six years old in the year of our Lord 1901. I was a sleepy, and people say a dreamy, abstracted young man. Geraldine thinks me handsome. She is alone in her belief, unless I agree with her in this, as in most things. I was possessed of a little fortune, and was a well-informed young man of studious bent, having read largely in a rather desultory way. My favorite study was the spiritual essence, or soul of man, especially my own.

It is a thing I believe most people have, though Geraldine says you have to take it on faith in the case of a great many people. What was it? Where was it, this pervading vital force within me? How did it exist within my body? What kept it there? Was death the result of a disassociation of the two? Was no man capable of ever separating the one from the other?

These are but a sample of the speculations in which I indulged. And I actually found myself in the way of solving some of these problems at last. Rummaging in the library of a deceased philosopher, I came

across a treatise on this very subject by a sage of ancient times, the learned Egyptian Archidechus. No, you will not find his name in the encyclopædias. I have purposely altered it, lest any one should search for the pamphlet and, finding it, become as I was—but I anticipate.

I seized upon the old moth-eaten parchment volume with avidity. This rare—I do not think there was another copy in existence except the one I read—and wonderful book treated of the spirit or essence of life as distinguished from the gross and visible body. The writer held that it was possible to separate the one from the other; in other words, according to Archidechus, the spirit might leave the body and return to it at pleasure; in fact, the writer knew of such a case and cited it; he also gave minute directions for accomplishing this wonderful feat. I shall not reveal them to you nor to Geraldine, though that is the only secret I do not share with her, so beware how you confide in me.

Of course the thing was ridiculous; no such separation was possible, so I reasoned. There were the directions, however; they fascinated me. I was always an imaginative fellow and a great tryer of all sorts of strange experiments; why should I not try this one? I confided my intentions to no one, not even to Geraldine. I locked myself in my room and devoured the old book. Great stress was laid upon the faith necessary and the condition of the mind. It was stated that any violent emotion might be of great assistance at the final moment of—shall I call it dissolution?

Now I was at peace with all the world except John Haverford. Haverford was in love with Geraldine Holabird, but as I felt sure of her affection, I was not able to get up any violent jealousy on her account. Geraldine has since told me that if she had known I felt so confident of her affection she would have supplied me with several emotions on that score of an exceedingly violent nature ; I don't believe it.

However, I complied with the other directions, and I even contrived to assume a reasonable amount of faith, but I could not quite manage the separation. I could apparently concentrate my vital force on one spot, for instance ; but, exert myself as I would, I could not break the tie. The idea possessed me ; I could think of nothing else. Geraldine says I was the most intensely unsatisfactory lover at this time that one could imagine, and that she had serious thoughts of giving me up for John Haverford.

Our love, which was a secret affair,—and none the less sweet for that, by the way,—was violently opposed by the heads of both our houses, there being some grudge between them. Although I was devoted to her and she to me, as I now know, though I did not at the time, yet I had never dared to take more of a lover's privilege than a respectful salute upon her hand. Geraldine was a tall and extremely dignified girl, and how she ever came to meet me clandestinely and write me those little notes—I have them yet—I don't know. She says she doesn't either.

But to come back to my experiment. My want of complete success preyed upon me. I grew thin, lost

my appetite, could think of nothing but that. This, I imagine, was one of the reasons for my final success. Geraldine says I ought not to have said that, as it will spoil the dénouement. However, it is too late now. One afternoon, more than usually discouraged at my repeated failures, when I was about to consign the volume to the fire as a false prophet, my sister, who acted as our Mercury, threw a note into my room from Geraldine. I opened it, I must confess, rather listlessly.

Good heavens! Her father had discovered my last letter, he was furiously angry, swore she should marry John Haverford, and she was now locked in her own room ; I would recognize it by the white ribbon hanging from the window-sill, and I must do something soon, for her father was terribly angry, and she loved me and me only, her own Harry,—and you know the rest! (Geraldine protests against these unflattering allusions to her notes.)

What happened a moment after, or how it happened, I am not prepared to state ; one thing I do know. I found myself in the street and, without a thought of how I came there, was hurrying toward Geraldine's house ; with reckless speed I ran headlong full-tilt into a lady of my acquaintance. The concussion nearly stunned me. What was my surprise, as I hastily took off my hat to apologize for my carelessness, to see the young lady calmly walk past me, apparently unconscious of my presence, and giving no evidence of having been in a collision with me! This rather astonished me, but Geraldine was so much

in my mind that I dismissed it and hastened on. It was not far to her house, and, sure enough, there was a white ribbon fluttering from the window I knew to be hers.

In my reckless desire to do something for her, I opened the gate and walked into the yard,—that is, I found myself there, and, of course, could have come no other way. I am not much of an athlete and could not have jumped the fence. These reflections did not occur to me at the time, but the next thing which happened did astonish me. While I was standing there in the walk, wondering what to do next, the front door opened and old Mr. Holabird came out. His face was red with anger, and he was armed with a thick club, presumably for me. Now, I am not a very brave man,—though Geraldine thinks me a perfect hero,—and I confess I trembled. However, I walked up to him and said, "Mr. Holabird, your daughter——"

He absolutely did not see me, and as he passed me, with excess of courage I laid my hand upon his arm, but he took no more heed of that than of my voice. What could have been the matter?

I began to feel a little alarmed, and gave myself a good pinch to see if I were awake, the usual resource of people in a like situation—Geraldine says that no one ever was in a like situation before. I certainly was awake, for the pinch hurt me. Marvelling more and more, I decided to go into the house. The old gentleman was my most dangerous opponent, and with him out of the way I felt I could brave the rest

of the household. If I could get at Geraldine, I hoped to persuade her to fly with me; and I did not doubt, once we were safely married, her father would forgive us, or if he would not, I should not greatly care, so long as I could have Geraldine.

Thinking thus, I walked up to the door and, placing my hand on the bell, gave it a good strong pull. The little silver-plated handle did not move an inch! I rubbed my eyes and tried it once more—no effect! I then sat down to consider. Was all the world bewitched? I racked my brain until the door opened and one of the children ran out. She came over to the chair I sat in and dropped into my lap. I got out of the chair in a second, just how I could not say. I am not over-fond of children of that age.

"Why, Jennie!" I cried, somewhat indignantly. "What do you mean by jumping on my lap in this unceremonious manner? Where is Geraldine? Go tell her I want to see her at once."

I was getting angry; but, would you believe it? that child went on playing with her doll and completely ignored me! It was too much; I wondered whether the whole town were in a conspiracy to drive me crazy. In despair I resolved to see Geraldine at once, and at the risk of being shot for a burglar, I turned to the door the little girl had fortunately left open and walked in.

As I entered the hall my foot slipped on the marble tiling and I fell heavily against an exquisite bisque head standing on the newel post. When I picked

myself up, sufficiently sore from my fall to be convinced that it was a real one, the bisque figure-head was standing safely and smiling at me—it was a laughing head—in a way I conceived to be particularly exasperating. I was so excited by this time that I struck it a furious blow with my fist, and still that infernal head stood and grinned at me!

If I did not see Geraldine soon I felt that I would go mad, so I marched upstairs until I came to the door of her room. I knocked gently on the door; there was no sound! I tried the handle with the same ill success as before. This was the last straw. I confess I stood at that door and shouted and screamed and kicked it,—pounded on it until I sank exhausted on the floor,—and still no thought of my real condition entered my head.

It happened that in my present situation my eyes were just on a level with the key-hole. I peeped in. There was Geraldine; I could see her plainly; and in another moment I saw her take a letter from her dress, kiss it passionately, and burst into a storm of sobs and tears. I was so wrought up by this time that in spite of my fatigue I jumped to my feet, and in another second I found myself by her side.

She was clad in some soft white wrapper, her hair all unbound, and was kneeling with her face in her arms on a chair. I was inexpressibly touched by her heart-broken attitude. I had never been anything but a very formal lover, as I said before; however, I thought the circumstances might warrant me in waiving a little ceremony, especially as she evidently

needed a comforter sadly, so I walked quickly over to her and laid my hand on her shoulder.

"Geraldine," I said, "my darling, I am here to help you. Geraldine, won't you speak to me?"

There was no answer and no intermit to the sobs and tears she was pouring on my letter. I thought this was pushing shyness to the limit, and I had never suspected her of being timid. However, as she made no objection to my hand being on her shoulder, I thought that was a good sign, and I knelt down beside her and slipped my arm around her neck and said,—

"Geraldine dearest, do not cry so,—courage,—it will be all right—" (Pause.) "Won't you speak to me? Please, please look at me!" (Longer pause.) "Geraldine!" I shouted, savagely, "look at me at once or I'll leave you forever!"

No response of any kind!

By heaven! What *did* it mean? I rose and dropped into a chair, remarking,—

"I'll sit here and look at you till you do get up and say something to me, if your father comes in here and kills me!"

So I waited and watched her. Presently she raised her beautiful eyes, red with weeping, and fixed them straight on me without the slightest sign of recognition, not even the fear that would have filled them had I been a stranger. What could be the matter?

I rushed over to the long swinging mirror in the corner, determined to look at myself and see what was wrong. I stood directly in front of the glass and

glanced at its bright surface to make a last effort to solve the mystery. Reader, I will solemnly assert that when I looked in that mirror, expecting to see myself, *I was not there!*

There was nothing reflected there but the room and contents and Geraldine beyond, completely oblivious of me. She had taken a small picture of me I had given her and was alternately looking at it and pressing it to her heart. This evidence of an affection which I scarcely dared to hope that she entertained for me was certainly very gratifying, and at any other moment would have filled me with happiness; but in the light of the fact that I was not there, where I felt myself to be, I was too horror-struck for anything else.

I stood mechanically glaring at Geraldine, at the glass which did not reflect me, and at myself. I could see myself with my own eyes perfectly, hear my own voice distinctly, or touch myself with my own hands; in fact, I could see and feel as well as ever. I resolved to make one more effort.

"Geraldine," I said, softly. "Geraldine," louder. "Geraldine!" in a perfect scream, "I am going to kiss you this moment!"

She was lying back in a large chair, her hands listlessly crossed in her lap and her eyes closed. I walked firmly to her, hesitated a second, and then bent and kissed her upon the lips.

She says now it was very ungenerous of me to have taken advantage of her, but I submit that I had given every possible warning of my intention, and besides I was wrought up to such a pitch by the events of the

afternoon I scarcely knew what I did ; so I kissed her again and again, and this did really have some effect upon her. At first she blushed a warm, beautiful crimson, and as I kissed her a second and a third time, she started, raised her head, opened her eyes with a little scream, and said,—

"Oh, I must have fallen asleep and dreamed he was here—I suddenly felt a kiss, it seemed—Oh, Harry, Harry, why do you not come and help your girl?" and her head sank back in the chair and tears came again into her eyes. "Oh, Harry, why are you not here?"

I was nearly frantic by this time.

"Geraldine," I said, "I *am* here. I did kiss you, really and truly, a moment ago."

But she paid no attention, and even while I was speaking kept up her little agonized appeal for me to come and help her. I rushed to the window, leaped out on the porch, jumped recklessly to the ground, dashed right into the arms of Mr. Holabird, ran through the streets to my own house, burst into the house, tore up the stairs to my room, and saw—what?

Myself, calmly and composedly lying back in the chair with Geraldine's letter in my hand! This was too awful; I sank down in the other chair, and as I did so my eyes fell upon the volume of the learned Archidechus. The mystery was solved! There in the other chair was my physical body, and in this one I sat, a disembodied spirit!

The explanation was so simple and evident it brought great relief to me. Everything was explained. Of course no looking-glass could reflect

the spirit of a man, no one could feel him—or it—or hear him or see him; of course he could not open doors or strike people or lift anything, though, to be sure, no door could prove a barrier to such an ethereal, immaterial entity as a disembodied spirit.

That accounted for my finding myself in Geraldine's room in spite of the locked door, for the child sitting down on my lap, for the bisque head smiling at my buffet, for Geraldine's ignorance of my presence. As to the kiss—well, love was the highest and noblest sensation (love such as we felt for each other) and as nearly a spiritually ethereal feeling as any human one could be; so, when I had kissed her, her spiritual being had responded to mine. This explanation fell easily in with the rest.

So far as I was concerned, I was, to put it plainly and simply, only my feelings and sensations; I was a wandering sensation! Doubtless my spirit took the same form as my visible body, but it was a thing so utterly immaterial as to be absolutely invisible to the human eye. I could talk, walk, see, and hear, because I had all my sensations with me, the guiding essence of my brain, too; but really my voice, for instance, was not audible, because when I opened my spiritual mouth it was only with the sensation of speaking, and no real sound was made; or, to put another explanation before you, my voice had become refined in proportion with the rest of me, and was pitched in such a sound-wave as the human ear was not capable of receiving and concentrating.

At that moment this seemed very interesting to me,

and I settled myself comfortably back in my chair and laughed long and loudly. Of course I could go back into my own body at any time, and matters would straighten themselves out at once. I sat speculatively contemplating my body. It was a dramatic moment, indeed!

My body was sitting in the chair in exactly the same position I had been when I left it, or rather, I should say, *we* had been when I left it. I bent over and touched it—or him?—he felt warm and natural, but not as if asleep. There was no beating of the heart, no rise or fall of the breast as in breathing, the eyes were opened and fixed but not glassy, the joints appeared to be flexible still, though, of course, I could not have moved one to see—in short, my body presented every appearance of suspended animation. I resolved not to try to get back into it just at present, and was still sitting there speculating upon my double self when the door opened and my sister—the one who brought the letter—came in; she was my favorite, and we were great friends. She glanced at me, and, supposing I was asleep, drew a chair over to the window and waited for me to awaken.

The fire was burning brightly in the grate, and, as ill-luck would have it, a bright little coal sprang out and fell on my lap,—that is, the lap of my body. It seemed as if there was yet some sort of a connection between us, because while the coal burnt into the leg of my body, it was I who felt the sensation. I rushed over to myself and attempted to brush it off. Of course I could not. The pain was really unbearable,

and, forgetting my state, I called to Mary, my sister; of course she did not hear me! This was a worse dilemma than before. I decided at once to resume my proper condition, when, horror of horrors! I found that I did not know how.

It was true! I had been so constantly occupied in endeavoring to get out of myself, as it were, that I had completely omitted to learn the way to get in! This was worse than anything previous. I forgot all about the glowing coal which was still burning me, in the dreadful possibility which rose before me. Suppose they should bury me, would I suffer the pangs of suffocation forever, or at least until my body resolved itself into its primordial elements? I knew, of course, my spirit would never die, and if my body did turn to dust, would my spirit go with those of other departed beings, as the Bible teaches us, or would the fact that I had taken my spirit in my own hands, as it were, condemn me to wander forever in my present state?

I certainly felt my spiritual hair turn gray. What would become of Geraldine? Would I ever see her again or, rather, would she ever see me? Would she at last forget me and marry some one else, and force me to stand powerless looking on? I ground my spiritual teeth in rage and clinched my spiritual hand and swore—but what was the use of swearing? I could do nothing. I was too utterly ethereal, too entirely disembodied to even haunt any one, too ephemeral for a ghost even! Oh, horror! I thought my brain would give way. I thought of everything I could to help me out.

I had dabbled a little in hypnotism and had experimented surreptitiously on various members of my family, principally my sister Mary, and with some effect. Now, hypnotism is the controlling of one will by another. The will is an essential attribute of the spirit; there is nothing gross about it. It is true that the weakest and most physically imperfect specimens of this twofold race of ours sometimes possess the most powerful wills; plainly, then, body, physically considered, had nothing to do with this will power which is the secret of hypnotic force. Apparently I had my will power in better shape for use than at any time in my corporate body. I had it separated, under command, and could concentrate it more easily and advantageously. I would try it.

I got up, made the usual passes, and ordered Mary to come and throw that coal off my leg. She did so at once. I was delighted. She stood abashed and silent in the presence of the, to her, hidden force controlling her. It flashed upon me in an instant I could cause her to open the volume of Archidechus and turn the pages for me. Joy! No sooner said than done.

I sat down beside her and willed her to do as I directed. I hastily made her turn to the part which treated of the resumption of the relationship; a new disappointment awaited me — the learned Archidechus stated that the individual in the case he studied had never resumed his mortal condition, and that the means of doing so were entirely unknown to him. That took away my last hope.

Mechanically I released Mary from the influence and then waited to see what she would do. Her glance fell upon me, and she looked at me wonderingly.

"Why," she said, "how long Harry sleeps!" She touched him on the shoulder. "Harry! Harry!" and then she looked in his face and screamed.

The family, the servants, every one, came running in. They filled my little room, and after narrowly escaping being crushed to death by our fat cook, who hysterically sank back in the chair in which I was sitting, I walked over to the corner of the room and waited. They picked him up and laid him on the bed, and tried all the simple remedies they knew to revive him. One poured brandy down his physical throat,—imagine the sensation in my spiritual one,—another one chafed his hands, one wetted a towel and struck him repeatedly with it, the old-fashioned feather was held under his physical nose—imagine my spiritual sensation a thousand times intensified and judge what I suffered.

I wished they would go away and bury me decently and let me alone; it was too much to endure quietly. I tried to hypnotize the whole lot, but unavailingly. Finally the futility of their efforts dawned upon them and they sat down to wait while one went for a doctor.

Doctor! I thought, contemptuously; what could he do? unless, indeed, they might find a stray spiritualist who could fulfil his promises and perhaps summon my spirit back into its earthly shell. Sure, never had I seemed so sweet to myself. If I ever got back to

myself again I made a solemn vow never to leave myself on any pretext.

Presently the door opened and my father came in. My mother was long since dead. The old gentleman was almost heart-broken ; he sat down beside me and took my physical hand. (I find the pronouns very confusing in endeavoring to relate this dual story.) I would have given worlds to comfort him. Different members of the family stood around the room talking in low, hushed whispers of the dreadful fate that had befallen me, exchanging reminiscences about me, extolling me for many virtues I never possessed. There was some consolation in hearing what a noble fellow I was. I have not heard it before, nor have I heard it since, except from Geraldine. Finally the door opened and the doctor entered. He could do nothing whatever, as I had foreseen,—he actually pronounced me dead,—and a few hours later I found myself neatly laid out in a coffin in the parlor,—that is, my physical body was.

I took the most comfortable chair—when no one else wanted it, of course—and waited for further developments. This was growing interesting, and I had become somewhat resigned to the hopelessness of my situation. I noted several curious facts. After a while I got very sleepy, intensely so, and lay back in my chair and closed my eyes and tried to go to sleep. It was no use ; I could not. And yet I never so longed to go to sleep in my life. The fact was, a spirit could not sleep ; and it was my body there in the coffin which felt sleepy ; but I must suffer for it. It was the same

way with hunger. I was hungry. I actually got so desperate as to go out to the pantry and look at the cold chicken and boiled ham there. I could easily smell them ; but as to the eating—oh, it was horrible ! I do not know how I got through the night.

The next day I could do nothing but sit and look at the people who came to see me and hear what they had to say. I have forgotten to mention that in my condition I seemed to have as one of its attributes a peculiar faculty of divining the real thoughts of the people who came to look at me. Among them was John Haverford. He was actually glad to see me ; so at least I read his thought. Geraldine thinks I must have been mistaken ; at any rate, the sight of him filled me with so much rage that I rushed over to him, I threatened him ; I did more, I struck him, kicked him, nothing of which he was sensible. It was too bad.

Geraldine did not come. I waited heart-broken for her. Would she come? The old man surely would not keep her. He was a pretty good fellow, after all —he is devoted to our youngest daughter now. I thought he certainly might bring her. I did not go out. I could not bear to leave my lonesome looking body in the coffin. I had no heart for further adventures, anyway. I was intensely cramped from lying so long in one position. When I die I am going to be cremated ; no more coffins for me. My wife says, however, she will not hear of that.

Geraldine told me afterwards that she passed the day in longing for me to come and take her away, and wondering why I did not, besides being continually

impressed with a premonition that something was going to happen. Finally, toward night on the second day of my anomalous situation, Mary—good and faithful Mary—bethought herself to go and tell Geraldine. On hearing the news that noble girl promptly fainted. She recovered herself, however, and through Mary's aid managed to get out of the house and come down to see me.

I was looking at myself very dejectedly in the parlor, half dead from loss of sleep, hunger, and thirst, and wholly crazy from loss of love and my dreadful prospects,—I surmised they would bury me to-morrow,—when I heard the outside door open, a familiar and yet nervous step sounded in the hall, and then the parlor door opened. I had recognized the step ; it was Geraldine, but how changed ! I forgot myself and my trouble, and as she threw herself down on her knees and clasped me in her arms and kissed me, I suffered for her agony a thousand times worse than for mine. Great heavens ! Was ever man in such a predicament? I bent over her in despair, and as she turned her face up in prayer, I kissed her lips again. She sprang to her feet and screamed,—

"Oh, he is not dead ! I am sure of it ! I felt him kiss me ! I cannot be mistaken ! Mary, send for papa, and tell him to bring his newest and most powerful storage battery along. I am sure Harry is not dead ; hurry, hurry !"

So it was from Geraldine herself that this new idea of torture emanated. Oh, why could they not let a disembodied spirit alone in its peaceful misery? An

electric battery could do no good, and it would be worse than the burnt feather.

Old Mr. Holabird was an electrician and an enthusiast. He would have sacrificed his best friend to an experiment, and consequently did not hesitate to come and practice upon me, whom he hated so bitterly previous to the unfortunate dissolution of partnership between my body and spirit. He was soon in the parlor with a servant following him bringing the battery. He was angry and astonished at seeing Geraldine, but his experiment was too engrossing for much time to be wasted upon her then.

Having obtained the consent of my father, he began taking off my shoes and then my socks. I blushed crimson ; at least my spiritual entity did. My physical body, I must confess, betrayed no evidence of shame at the exposure ; and before Geraldine, too ! Mary and father and the rest of the family looked on with anxiety and little apparent faith. Geraldine stood beside me, resting one hand against my breast and looking at me as if not to lose the faintest sign of life I might show. Her father, all business and energy, attached the wires with a reckless want of ceremony ; I thought in wretchedly bad taste. I must confess I hoped for the result of this experiment but faintly ; however, there might be something in it, so I stood with my arm around Geraldine and my head resting upon her shoulder—spiritually, of course—as the connection was made.

I was quiet enough for just one-millionth of a second, till I felt the power of the current. It was

awful; worse than any other experiment. I groaned in anguish while that fiendish old man made the current stronger and stronger, and that miserably placid body of mine lay there as calm and as unfeeling as a log, while I was in torment. I flew at the old man, clinched my hands in his hair, grasped him around the throat, did everything, and yet had to bear a current strong enough to have killed a dozen men, added to which was the anguish of feeling my last hope vanish. I was doomed!

The scientific fervor of old Holabird was at last satisfied, and he allowed the current to die down to one of much less intensity, merely keeping, as he said, a little on in case of an emergency. A little! It felt like ten toothaches run into one, but was so much less than before that it seemed almost like a caress in the first moment of relief.

While I was standing there helplessly, wondering what they would do with me, the old man walked up to Geraldine, who stood wringing her hands, looking at me, with her last hope gone, too, poor girl! and said,—

"Come, Geraldine, we must go; the man is dead."

"Liar!" I shouted; but no one heard me.

"And there is no use staying here," he continued; "I tell you you must come. I promised John Haverford that you would see him to-night. He asked me for your hand, and I consented to-day."

Oh, I could have begged him to turn on the electricity again; each pang fate had in store for me was worse than before. Geraldine answered gloriously,—

"But *I* have not consented."

"What difference? I say you shall marry him!" he said, grasping her wrist.

"And I say I will not! I will be faithful to my dear dead Harry here!"

"Nonsense! You shall marry Haverford! You must!"

At this moment a strange thing occurred. Geraldine wrenched herself away from her father, threw herself upon the physical half of me, and whispered, "I'll die with him first!"

Something passed over me as a blinding lightning flash, and behold! The body in the coffin struggled, sat up, clasped a trembling arm about Geraldine, and exclaimed,—

"I am not dead, Geraldine. And you, you infernal old villain, get out of my sight! Take off the battery; give me something to eat and drink!"

The spirit had entered my body again. My love for Geraldine and her love for me had wrought the miracle, just as anxiety for her and love for her had wrought the first change. Ay, through love the world is made and destroyed.

There is nothing more to tell. My story was so circumstantial that people generally believe it in spite of the learned doctors, who hold it to have been merely a case of suspended animation. In my mind and Geraldine's, however, there is no doubt about it. Besides, does not the learned Archidechus say—but never mind; if it were not for this affair Geraldine says she might have been years in finding out her

heart as she did when she thought me dead, and her father never would have consented to our marriage as he did.

He is very kind to us now, and we are very happy, and have only anxiety lest my spirit should ever take to wandering again. Geraldine says if it does she will marry John Haverford, who is still pining for her; but I know that is only a threat to prevent the dissolution of partnership, as she confesses in private that she would never marry any one but me—never!

I am very fat and well now, and have burned up the parchments of the learned Archidechus, and am training myself utterly to disbelieve such things. The memory seems like a faint dream now in the light of our present happiness, for Geraldine is the loveliest and sweetest of wives, and says I am the best of husbands. And giving her that last word, I lay down the pen.

THE END

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